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## ARABIAN TALES.

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*The Adventures of Simouftapha, and the Princess  
Ifetifone.*

**U**NDER the reign of Haroun-Alrafchid, a young man, of the moft regular features, of the moft beautiful and agreeable countenance, and of the moft majestic and elegant mein, came to settle in Bagdad. Here he purchafed a confiderable inn, empty by the death of an eminent citizen; he embellifhed the gardens, gave a new appearance to the rooms, and, in fhort, he converted this fmall palace into fuch a fplendid cook's fhop as had never been feen in Bagdad, or perhaps in any other city of Afia.

Here every thing was ferved up in filver-plate and china, by flaves drefled with uncommon tafte and neatnefs. The paftry, and every other difh, was feafoned with a delicacy which even the cooks of the caliph were unable to rival. This moft eminent cook's name was Simouftapha.

VOL. II.

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His

His fine figure, his engaging and polite manner, and the splendid entertainments which he gave, soon invited to his house the first rate people of Bagdad; and, as his ragouts never failed to sharpen the bluntest appetite, he became the favourite cook of the place. His house and gardens were continually crowded with those who prefer luxury to the most rational enjoyments.

The caliph's courtiers were constantly praising in his presence the cook's exquisite entertainments; but, either the prince could spare no time for the trifles of the kitchen, or the desire of satisfying himself of the skill of Simoustapha must come to him in a way corresponding with his own whim and caprice.

The slaves, particularly the females, of Haroun's palace, took a turn every day round Simoustapha's shop, and never returned without something prepared after his best manner.

The most forward of these slaves was Namouna, the affectionate governess of the princess Ifetilsone, a most amiable young lady, and the caliph's sole progeny by Zobeida, who, of all his other women, was his darling favourite.

Namouna enjoying such freedom as was suitable to her station and time of life, walked every day in the streets of Bagdad. The children



dren knew her notwithstanding her veil, and named her whenever they saw her.

Simoustapha, whose shop she frequented, naturally obliging to every body, was particularly so to her. He made her sit down, served her first, and, by his agreeable and polite attentions, prepossessed her much in his favour.

The good old lady, highly gratified with every piece of flattery, said within herself, "Ha, fine young fellow, heaven bless thee, thou reversest old age!" and, whenever she entertained the young princess with the news she had picked up in her city-walks, she always concluded with an encomium on the charming Simoustapha.

He had shown her all his gardens with the utmost politeness, and treated her on every occasion, even without knowing her, with every possible degree of respect. The whole of his behaviour was natural, and flowed from a benevolent soul, and the highest esteem for the sex.

"He is so obliging," exclaimed Namouna, "his voice is so sweet and melodious, that every word conveys a secret charm. His deportment is noble as his deeds. In a word, he is a transcript of Joseph, Jacob's darling son. God protect the woman who shall be tempted

to take hold of his mantle ! But he is harmless as a dove."

Ilfetiſſone was highly diverted with her old confidant. And no ſooner had ſhe returned from the city, than ſhe inquired how ſhe had ſucceeded with the cook.

I will take care, ſaid Namouna, that I may not be impoſed upon; ſure I am not ſo weak as to fall in love; but there can be no harm in regaling myſelf with his ragouts; whatever comes from his hand may ſerve a queen. Surely it would diſcover a want of taſte, to ſhun the company of a young man more beautiful than any prince upon earth. Why ſhould I deny myſelf the pleaſure of ſeeing him? Every look of his ſeems to renew my age. Methinks his paſtries reflect his image. I have one of them here for Meſſour, our principal eunuch, which he will take to the palace.

Namouna was not miſtaken; for Meſſour had carried the tart which the governeſs had given him to the favourite ſultaneſs, who regaled the caliph with it, without letting him know whence it had come.

Haroun having exclaimed how good it was, ſoon learned that it was got at Simouſtapha's ſhop, the cook of whom he had heard ſo much.

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The sultaness proposed to Haroun that next morning they should have a full service from this excellent cook's shop, and that Mesrour should be instantly dispatched with the necessary commands.

This is but little of what the enthusiasm of the old governess about Simoustopha excited in the palace. Every thing conspired to increase it: His easy manner, his fine figure, the real excellence of his ragouts, and the prepossession of the whole palace in his favour, although he had scarcely been a year at Bagdad.

Haroun eat with a very uncommon relish at the table of his favourite sultaness, and showed that he was particularly pleased with the repast. Next morning he ordered his own table to be supplied from the same shop; his women partook of the dainties. In short, it came to this, that nobody in the palace thought himself well dined unless there were one or two of Simoustopha's dishes on the table.

Namouna rejoiced in seeing her idol's reputation increase. The caliph had already sent to his daughter's table several of the most exquisite dishes; but they did not flatter her palate so much as the governess expected. The continual mention that was made of Simoustopha's

name distracted her; but the gluttonous woman was not here for nothing.

"See," says the good governess, "how this charms the eye; smell this cake." She now describes the kitchen of Simoustapha: "It is as beautiful as if it were hung round with mirrors. The pavement is of polished marble; every thing is incomparably brilliant. In the middle of seven beautiful young men, dressed as for a wedding, and employed about the furnaces, Simoustapha watches over the business. Being considerably higher than any of the workmen, he appears like the moon among the stars. He finishes off every dish himself, and thus conveys to it a secret charm." But, whilst the old governess was thus launching out into the praises of the cook, she did not perceive what impression she was making upon the young princess; for these encomiums kindled a flame no less lively than dangerous.

Iffetilsone, who wished to conceal both from herself and others her fondness for a cook, in endeavouring to combat the rising passion, loses her sleep, her appetite, her tranquillity, and falls into such a melancholy, as made her affectionate father dread the consequence.

The poor governess bewailed the situation of her charming mistress. Her sighs made her suspect the cause of her uneasiness. In short,

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an order which she received, though but of little consequence, confirmed her suspicions.

For two days the princess had eaten nothing : " I see," said Namouna, " that I will be obliged to procure for you, as well as for myself, a dish from the hand of my friend Simoustapha."

The beautiful princess smiled without saying any thing ; and the obliging old governess ran to her favourite cook's shop. " Serve me well," said she to him, " my amiable young man ; I have a daughter whose life is dearer to me than my own ; display your skill in preparing a dish to revive her appetite. For these two days she has eaten nothing, and I fear the consequence. If you make a ragout to please her, you shall have a hundred sequins for your trouble."

Simoustapha looked the old lady broad in the face, and knew perfectly that she had no daughter ; besides, that the hundred sequins which she offered were sufficient to assure him of the fact if he had not known it already.

" Is she then indisposed ?" replied he, with an air of anxiety. " More than indisposed," answered Namouna ; " you see my distress for her : but whatever comes from you is so good, that, if she once taste it, I hope she will get better."

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"This is the first time," replied Simousta-pha, "that I have been afraid of not succeeding." He set instantly to work, and suffered nobody to touch it but himself: In a moment the old woman was ready to set out for the palace; but she first wanted to satisfy his demands.

The cook would take nothing. "If it please her," said he, "I am well paid; if not, I should have nothing."

Namouna reached the palace, presented the ragout; Isetilsone tasted it, found it delicious, and eat the whole of it. The eyes of the governess sparkled with joy upon seeing the success of her stratagem; and she now extolled the complaisance, the eagerness, and the address of Simousta-pha.

He believed, said she, that it was for my daughter; in an instant he set to work. I would have given him a hundred sequins, but he would take nothing; he was happy that he had it in his power to oblige me.

In what sort of a body, said Isetilsone, does this dignity and nobility of a prince lodge? It lodges, replied Namouna, in a body which Solomon himself would be proud of, were he to appear again upon earth; and he would find it difficult to acquit himself so well as Simousta-pha.

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When the repast was over, this beautiful princess abandoned herself anew to her phrenzy. "What," said Namouna to her, "are you to behave so, after you have eaten with such pleasure! Instead of distracting you, I thought that I should have put you in a situation to receive the caliph, both with greater pleasure to yourself and more comfort to him."

"I cannot do otherwise, my dear Namouna," said the princess, "in spite of me my heart is wounded." Without doubt, replied the governess, there is a secret within your breast which preys upon your vitals, and yet you would conceal it from me, who love you more than my own life.

As my secret, answered Ilsetilsone, is nothing to my honour, it ought to die with myself. If I cannot keep it, am I to expect that another can?

My beautiful princess, replied the governess, you are about to hasten your destiny. My soul is a well into which your secret may descend without ever being seen again, and I may fall upon some means to afford you comfort.

"Oh, Namouna," interrupted Ilsetilsone, "pray to God to cure me, he must interpose some miracle in my behalf."

Well we will pray together, and obtain this miracle. He has already performed many in these

these places. By miraculous interposition he delivered the Jews, his chosen people, from the hands of Pharaoh : But, in the present case, he will not have to dry up the sea. Instead of that great man Moses, there is only need of a secondary instrument, and here am I ready to serve you ; confide in me ; don't distrust her who loves you more than her own life, and who is ready to sacrifice it to your interest. I have years and experience ; I can administer useful counsel, and devise methods which your own inexperience could never suggest. In a word, intrust me with the subject of that melancholy which you indulge at the risk of your life.

Ho ! my good Namouna, replied the princess, shame ought to shut my mouth ; but my confidence in you makes me open it.

You know as well as I the true cause of my misfortune ; and I would have blamed you more than any person else for having contributed to it, did I not see that it is the effect of an inevitable fatality.

I am passionately in love : every thing has tended to inflame my passion, and to derange my brain. You, Namouna, the women of the palace, my father the caliph, every one seems to me to be him. In short, he hath appeared to me in two dreams. Now name, if you dare,  
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the object of my affection : tell who is the only man with whom the daughter of the commander of the faithful, of the king of the kings of the earth would live, and without whom life itself would be insupportable. Excuse, if possible, this incredible extravagance, and pardon yourself for having raised it by your continual accounts and encomiums.

“ Have you seen him in your dreams ?” said the serious old governess with a grave countenance : “ You may assure yourself that if it was really he, he was as beautiful as the angel who poured out the sherbet to the great prophet when he was translated to the seventh heaven. Do you recollect his features ?

“ No, that is impossible,” said Ilsetilsone ; “ I was confounded, transported, at the sight of such an enchanting object. He threw himself at my feet, and swore that he would adore no other creature but me ; but in two dreams I have constantly seen the same object. I would recollect him if I saw him again ; but it is as impossible for me to paint him, as to forget him.

“ Thus, Namouna,” added the princess, with an air of confusion, “ while my father denies the princes of the east, one after another, the pretended honour of my hand, the object of the love and ambition of so many kings, I  
would

would think myself happy in being bound for life to ——."

"To Simoustapha," replied the old woman: "don't blush to name him; his name is a pagnegyric. All the crowns upon earth should be put upon his head. There are a hundred kings in the world, but there should be none but Simoustapha."

"Take care," said Ifetilsone, "you will ruin me."—I ruin you, my dear princess, I love you more than my own soul. Let the angel of death shut my eyes as soon as they have witnessed your felicity. We must visit Simoustapha together; and if you find that it was he who appeared to you in your two dreams, the fate which has destined you for him is irrevocable, and I instantly become the instrument of your destiny.

"But how," answered Ifetilsone, "can I see him without exposing myself?" Trust that to me, said the old governess; sleep well this night, that sleep may revive your complexion, and restore the red to your lips. To-morrow you shall see him whom you love; then you shall know if it be he whom the enchanting dream has presented to you; and, as I am always ready to serve you, matters shall be managed so, as not to have the smallest appearance of being thought of before-hand. Ifetilsone,

Ilse, a little comforted, upon hearing this went to bed.

Early next morning the old governess flew to the shop of Simoustapha. "I am come," said she to him, "to give you an account of the ragout you gave me: You have been paid according to your wish, for there was none of it left; but my fine young man," added she, "what will you give me, if I shall inform you of the happiest news possible for one of your age and condition?"

Whatever you please, replied Simoustapha.

I am to tell you, continued the old governess, that the lady you have regaled so well is to dine to-day on your ragouts; but take care to prepare every thing with your own hand.

Your orders, replied Simoustapha, I shall most cheerfully execute. If so, said Namouna, you owe me a kiss already; see if I shall have it in my power to increase the number of your obligations.

"Do you know that you have to give a dinner to the greatest and the most beautiful princess upon earth, even to the incomparable Ilse?" My heart, replied Simoustapha, blushing, hath already announced her to me.

What, said Namouna, your heart? What, your heart? Are you in love with my princess?

“The princes of Asia burn with love for her, and blush not to own their passion. Her beauty, her virtues, subdue every one who hears of her; but, for my own part, I would be proud to be one of her slaves.”

If you are prejudiced in her favour, answered Namouna, and if you are impatient to see her, I can assure you she has the same curiosity with respect to you.

Her slave, said Simouftapha, is ready to fly to her feet. Since you are in this situation, replied the old governess, you ought to come yourself and ask payment; you will receive it from her beautiful hand. Prepare the dinner, send it into the palace with your own slaves, by the large gate. As soon as the repast is over, you must be ready at a secret outlet, which I will show you. But remember, my dear Simouftapha, that you now owe me a kiss more.

I owe you a thousand, said Simouftapha, embracing the old governess with rapture; after which they went different ways.

Simouftapha exerts his utmost skill in preparing the repast. Ten blooming young slaves, beautiful as Cupids, and dressed with the utmost elegance, are ordered to carry it to the palace.

Ilsetilsone is agreeably surprised with this piece of gallantry. The old confident officiated



as landlord; and the young princess, eating ragouts prepared by him whom she loved, made a most delicious repast, which far exceeded any idea she had conceived of it.

She praised every bit to Namouna.—Eat, eat, said the good old governess to her, what comes from him must be good. Is it possible that Simousthapha loves me, says the princess, when he has never seen me?

Seen you! replied Namouna, you who lose your rest for him. Whatever is decreed in heaven, my dear child, must be accomplished on earth by means, no matter how extraordinary.

As soon as I told him that a great lady, very well pleased with the first dish she had got from him, wanted a whole dinner prepared by his own hands, he guessed it to be you, because his heart had announced it to him. In the transports of joy into which he was thrown, in having it in his power to serve you, and the hope of seeing you, he quite confounded me old and forward as I am.

You will pardon me, my dear princess, for receiving the first caresses of your lover, when I tell you, that he appeared to me to be passionately fond of you. Besides, I am ready to give you what I got. In saying that, the old governess threw herself on the neck of her mistress, and embraced her with her whole soul.

You are too fond, my good Namouna, said Ilsetilsone. Not more so than every female of Bagdad, replied Namouna. If the kisses of this beautiful cook were to be sold, you would see what a price; the crier would make a fortune by them.

While this conference was going on in the palace, the young slaves of Simoustapha, who had been ordered to serve up the dishes on the table of the princess, returned transported with joy at the manner in which they had been received, and each with five pieces of gold from the hand of the beautiful Ilsetilsone.

Simoustapha, encouraged to make his visit, from the flattering reception his slaves had met with, dispatches his business, goes to the bath,—perfumes himself, and dresses in his best robes. After this he went straight to the palace, and to the outlet that had been pointed out to him.

Namouna waited at the door to introduce him. The princess observed from the terrace of the palace a man conducted towards her, suspended between love, hope, and fear. “It is he,” said she, “the very man whom I saw twice in my dreams; he appeared to me the first time in this dress; the second time, his dress was so splendid that I was unable to bear its lustre.”

Whilst

Whilst she was making these short remarks, Simouftapha entered the room destined for the interview; and the princess came in from another side. Simouftapha, as soon as he saw her, saluted her most respectfully, and looked upon her down-cast eyes, and her arms across her breast, till she spoke to him.

"Are you," said Ilsetilsone, "the cook whose praises I have heard so often celebrated?" You do me too much honour, answered Simouftapha.

I don't agree to that, replied the princess; you appear very far superior to your condition, although you acquit yourself in it with amazing address. You perform your business so nobly, that, although it seems made for you, you do not seem made for it. But what, pray, were the reasons that induced you to make choice of Bagdad for your residence?

Oh! most admirable princess, said Simouftapha, if you wish your slave to speak sincerely, remove the veil which impairs his confidence, that the truth which proceeds from his mouth may reach your ear. I have already suffered too much in being prevented from admiring the charms which that impertinent object keeps from my view.

"You have not, said the princess, been a year at Bagdad, and, if my veil distresses you, it

hath been but for a moment ; how then can you speak of long torments ?” From this moment, replied Simoustapha, I have felt the first transport of love, which will end but with my life.

A rigorous law, replied Ilsetilfone, hinders me to take off my veil.—A respectful bashfulness, answered Simoustapha, detains my secret upon my lips.

This childishness, cried the good Namouna, makes us lose time ; and the principal eunuch, who is not long in going his rounds, has a great chance to come upon us. Upon saying that, she approached the princess, and tore off the veil.

It seemed as if timidity and bashfulness had been attached to this trifling piece of stuff. For, as soon as Ilsetilfone got rid of it, she slipped toward Simoustapha ; and they now embraced each other with the greatest appearance of tenderness.

A collation had been prepared on the spot ; and the two lovers, for no word there had escaped from both, availed themselves of it. They looked, sighed, and eat with distraction, while the blessed quarter of an hour flew on.

Namouna turned away from them. They parted with tears in their eyes. They protested that they were in love for life, and that they must break the chains of pleasure and of custom at once.

Ilsetilfone,

Ilsetilsone, from an excess of content, fell instantly into the utmost despair. In vain, every day, did they serve her table with dishes prepared by her lover; she was not to be imposed upon by the niceties of art. From the happy moment of their interview, every object but himself appeared insipid to her. She became emaciated. She pined away.

Namouna was distressed for her. "Be then reasonable," said she to her, "enjoy the pleasure of loving and of being loved. You desire to see your lover, and to be in his company. But prudence requires of you to do your duty. You may ruin the whole by your want of patience, and efface that vivid complexion, that flower of youth, which is the greatest charm of your beauty. Leave the matter to me. A matter of so great moment cannot be happily conducted with such precipitation.

"Look at these beautiful stars; if one of them wishes to hasten its course, it leaves its proper orbit, and falls, never to rise again. That which directs your fortune keeps pace with the rest. There is a danger in wishing to change its course."

I hear your advice, my dear Namouna, said Ilsetilsone; but I cannot follow it. If you wish me to eat, tell me that you will let me see Simouftapha.

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“Very well, since he must engross your whole attention, sit down to table and eat; I shall fall upon some method for you.”

The princess caused some food be brought her, took a little of it, and instantly asked what she had done.

Since you wish to know my scheme, said Namouna, attend: For these some days you have been confined to bed, and have not paid your usual visits to the caliph. I expect to see the principal eunuch coming to inquire what confines you to your room. Upon his answer, the caliph and Zobeida, your mother, will come to see what is the cause of your indisposition. Attend to all the questions which the affection of a father and of a mother can suggest. Imagine them saying, *Do you feel any pain? Does ought here hurt you, or displease you? What will comfort you?* Prepare your answers before-hand.

Beware of saying that you are indisposed; for they would send the doctor to you, who should confound you with nauseous drugs, which you have no need of; but say that you are overwhelmed with a langour, which has been occasioned by too much confinement; and that a little exercise would be the cure.

You must then request them to permit you to go to amuse yourself at Bagdad; and that they would grant you two days, at two different

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ent times, so near one another as to have the desired effect; at the same time, so distant as not to interrupt the business of the town. Besides, a crier must announce when you are to set out, that there may be nobody either to disquiet you, or to feel uneasy on your account.

You must ask to go to the bath the first day, and to visit the shops the second. Our devotion will next induce us to visit the mosques. I will then conduct every thing so as to turn out the leave you have got for amusement to the best advantage in every respect.

Namouna had scarcely unfolded her design, when Mesrour, the chief of the eunuchs, arrived from the caliph, to visit the princess.

The consequence of this small event justified all the foresight of Namouna.

Haroun and Zobeida came to see their daughter, who obtained leave from them to walk in Bagdad, at the times, and under the conditions premeditated by Namouna.

Haroun, upon returning into his apartment, orders Giafar to take every necessary precaution, in order that the princess might, early next morning, along with her retinue, enjoy the pleasure of a walk in all the streets of the city; and that she might see every curiosity in it without being exposed to the looks of any body.

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The grand vizir issued these orders to the chief magistrate; and, on that very night, all the people of Bagdad were warned by the public criers to ornament their shops with all their most curious wares: But, at the hour of prayer, nobody was to appear, either in the streets or in the houses, that neither the passage, nor the curiosity of Ifetilsone, who was to walk at that hour, might be interrupted: Every thing that might be taken by those who composed her retinue was to be paid, and every pillage they made indemnified. Those, however, who, from a spirit of restlessness or curiosity, should disobey the orders, were to meet with the severest treatment.

When the business was set in order, Namouna, anticipating the success, came to acquaint Ifetilsone. "Ha! well, is every thing set in order according to your wishes? Will the streets of Bagdad be sufficiently clear for you to-morrow morning?"

"They will be too much so, if all the inhabitants remove, replied the princess, if nobody remain in the houses."

You don't view the nature of the order in the same light that I do, Madam; all the shops, all the houses which are upon the streets must be entirely empty; but if to-morrow all the people of Bagdad were forced to go out of the  
city

city, for the want of tents they would perish by the heat of the sun. Every one is to shut himself up in a part of his house, from which he can neither hear nor see any thing, and far less be seen. Those who are rich will go to their country-seats; such again as are poor will seek where to conceal themselves. The city must look like a desert; and it is by being so that it will answer our purpose. There you may do what you please: Your female attendants will run up and down the shops with a curiosity, and an eagerness of which you have no idea. The eunuchs will follow in order to watch the females, and to observe what they pick up. They must also attend to some small affairs of their own; and, during that time, we must mind ours. Be content; go to the bath; sup cheerfully; sleep as well as you can; and don't become careless about your beauty. To-morrow I hope to see the happiest couple upon earth.

Isfetilsone did every thing that her good governess required of her.

The good cook was thrown into despair, when he heard the criers announce, that, before his princess should walk in Bagdad, every body should disappear; and that he who should have the impudence to appear in her sight should be put to death.

Namouna

Namouna arrived and found him overwhelmed with grief. "Why," said she, after she had explained the motive of it to him, "do you torment yourself about an order which I expressly solicited, in order to bring about your interview with my princess? To-morrow morning you must send all your slaves out of the city: You must pretend to follow them; you must enter your house by the back-door; and you must wait for us in the bottom of the garden. We will go into your shop; the noise that we will make will let you know where we are; and, at any rate, without your showing yourself, I know where to find you. As soon as it is night, prepare something to regale us with to-morrow. I know that you are by no means avaricious; I could engage for it, however, that you are going to make some trick of it."

You astonish me, said Simouftapha, especially when I am so much disposed to serve you. I will put you to the trial immediately, replied the old lady; what I am to tell you ought to charm you: Do you remember how you paid me for the first good news I brought you? Could you still pay me in the same manner?

I understand you, said Simouftapha, you are here in the midst of all that I possess, choose what



what you please. What you ask is no more mine.

Pure avarice! cried Namouna merrily. I will tell your mistress that I have discovered a failing in you, which is not at all common to people of your age. I will avenge myself upon you for this.

I will not, however, cause pain to my dear child: She has not had a moment's ease since she saw you. She does nothing but sighs. She would not have survived, had I not fallen upon some means to get you a quiet interview with one another at Bagdad. I want to take her some good news from you. What shall I say to her?

"That I am charmed, that I am in raptures, that I cannot express myself, that I am impatient for the happy moment which shall reunite us. If she has enjoyed little rest since we saw one another, I have enjoyed none. My heart is so full of the charming idea, that her name is continually on my lips. I am forced to condemn myself to an absolute silence, that it may not escape."

Well, said the old woman, provided I can repeat all that, I may say that I go with my pockets full of words: With respect to deeds —, do you give me nothing to carry to her?

However, I should have been faithful in giving it to her. In saying so, the good old woman presented her cheek; but to no purpose. She then parted with him: "Adieu, covetous Simoustapha!"

Namouna hastened to the palace, and repeated the conversation, word for word, even to the pleasantry with which it ended. What! seriously, my dear Namouna, said Ifsetilsone, did you want a kiss from him? Could you be so amorous?

I don't say so, replied Namouna; but, even under my wrinkles, my heart is as if I were only twenty years of age; and, if I should live a hundred, I would never be the enemy of that man who was like the beautiful Simoustapha. My pretensions to beauty go but a short way. I am content with a trifle; but it gives me great pleasure. If I renounced love altogether, I should become too bad. Go sleep; sleep soundly: The morrow is your day.

The morrow morning, as soon as prayers are over, Ifsetilsone and sixty beautiful slaves go down to Bagdad.

The princess, conducted by her governess, set out straight for the baths which were nearest the beautiful cook's house; she enters it, and speaks with her principal eunuch. "I will  
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be served," said she to him, "by the slaves of this house. I wish all mine to amuse themselves, and to enjoy my folly: Conduct them through the whole of Bagdad." The eunuch obeyed. She entered the bath; stopped a little; went and came according to the caprice of her passion; being all the while escorted by Namouna alone.

Simoustapha waited with impatience in a remote part of the garden, under a rural grotto, where was a fountain in which he usually cooled his liquors. He prepared breakfast, and every now and then chanted over verses, in which he endeavoured to paint both the ardour of his passion, and the happiness which he was about to enjoy. Of all his household he had kept only an expert young slave, who was perfectly handsome, but dumb. All on a sudden a noise in the garden strikes his ear; he rises, and runs up.

This was the object of his desires, of his dreams, and of his songs. Ilsetilsone had arrived a few moments before.

She had approached the grotto without being perceived; and had listened with the most extreme pleasure to the verses of her lover. The subject of them affected her; and the sweetness of his voice conveyed a double charm. Not wishing him to know that she had been

listening, she shifted a little from the spot, and made a noise to let him hear her. At last she joined her lover.

It was no common passion sprung from a sudden coincidence of sentiments, which forced them together: It was a stroke of sympathy; it was still more, if their fate was interwoven, as they both had reason to believe. They stood still, and gazed at one another with a curiosity, mixed with the most lively joy, and mutual admiration. In order to embrace, their arms rose in concert; and, in the first embrace, they both fainted away.

Luckily the bottom of the grotto was covered with moss; and the prudent Namouna had always taken care to prevent accidents. They found it necessary to quit a place inconvenient for an interview of such an interesting nature. Simoustapha conducted his mistress by the arms under a green arbour, which the rays of the sun could not penetrate. Here she found a commodious sofa, and a repast consisting of the most exquisite dainties. Besides, this spot united every thing that could add comfort to the situation of the princess. Here, a deep basin received water clearer than crystal, from the mouth and nostrils of different animals, whose variety exhibited an agreeable object. And  
this

this diffused the most delicious-freshness under the arbour.

Isfetilsone and Simoustapha sat down to table close together; Namouna and the mute served them. They eat little, and spoke still less; the language of the eyes was sufficient; it bespoke great passions.

At last the princess broke the expressive silence, and cried out with an angelic voice, "Oh! Simoustapha, I love you, and I find that it will be impossible for me ever to love any other so well. I don't know how that frightful distance which fortune appears to have put between us shall be got over. If the overthrow of my high pretensions could effect it, it should be done immediately. My soul can lose nothing by uniting with your's, whose nobleness equals its rank. You put that fortune to the blush which appears willing to disgrace you; and I would glory if, by raising you, I could have it in my power to expose her injustice."

"I am too much elevated, Madam," replied Simoustapha, "by the compliment you pay me. It hath constituted my fortune and my glory, as well as my happiness. You love me; my ambition is gratified; and, were I in possession of a crown, I could reap no other satisfaction from it, than that of falling a crowned slave at your feet."



"Let us swear," said the princess, "to live always for each other in spite of fortune, and always to guard against whatever may be the least obstacle to our union."

"Here, at your knees, I swear to the above, by the name of the great prophet," cried Simoustapha. The beautiful princess raised him up; the tenderest kisses sealed their oaths, and caused their tears flow and disappear every now and then.

Namouna, too insensible of the value of these tears, wanted to stop them. "What!" said she, "are you going to pass the time in weeping, instead of rejoicing? How I hate languishing lovers. Drink, eat, and banish sorrow." At the same time she served them with different sorts of food, and made them drink the one after the other from the same cup. "Have you no musical instruments?" said she to Simoustapha. "Send for them, nobody sees us; and, when you shall have done with weeping, I will teach you how to amuse yourselves."

The mute, upon a signal from his master, ran and brought different musical instruments. Namouna took up one of them, and began with a sprightly tone; but Ifetilsone, with a tender and seducing voice, fell a repeating some charming verses, which rendered the harmonious sounds of the instruments, which she gracefully

fully played upon, still more affecting. Simousta-pha answered her immediately, and discovered as much genius and judgment in the composition of the words, as skill in the music. He shone chiefly in the tender and affecting expressions.

For the instant Namouna was content; they too seemed to be amused; but she put a stop to their pleasures, by warning them to part, that they might give no suspicion to the eunuchs, and the females who composed their retinue. It was not without remorse, that these two happy lovers yielded to the circumstance. They sealed their adieus with tender embraces and new tears. "By Mahomet!" said the impatient Namouna, "have done, and let us part quickly."

The lovers parted. The princess was dextrous enough to conceal the features of her countenance, that they might not discover the passions by which she was about to be agitated. Upon this she joined her slaves, in order to return to the palace, supported by the hope of soon seeing her dear Simousta-pha again.

The caliph was waiting with impatience for his daughter. As soon as the principal eunuch had announced her, he ran to her with the utmost affection to ask her how she was after the bath, and her walk.

Ilsetilfone

Ilsetilsone expressed herself pleased with the variety of objects which she had seen in the shops. The caliph, finding her eyes more animated than usual, and her complexion more vivid than that of the governess, congratulated himself upon having had it in his power to amuse her in the streets of Bagdad. The princess Zobia, on seeing her daughter, was equally happy in finding that melancholy removed, which might have been attended with dangerous consequences.

At length, it was agreed upon, that Ilsetilsone, after resting two days, should return to Bagdad in search of new amusements for her health. And the criers were ordered to announce the intention of the caliph.

Ah! what long two days! said the princess. Can you conceive my situation, my dear Namouna, during this cruel absence? and how I shall be able to live at such a distance from Simoustapha?

“If these two days were added to mine,” said Namouna, “they would roll on quicker than your’s.” Ah! how would you fill them up? I would sleep the best half, and spend the rest in eating, drinking, and enjoying myself, and in dreaming on the pleasure of soon seeing my beautiful Simoustapha again; besides, I should not give myself so much pain about seeing my lover,

if

if we were to weep all the time like infants, or to pay one another as serious compliments as those that are used on the instalment of a mufti. I have not always been old ; I have been in love, tho' it was never known ; but I managed matters otherwise. It is generally believed that we who are chearful never think, because we laugh much, and often laugh at what others think. But, had I been engaged in an adventure like your's, I should have acted a capital part. You, Namouna, are not the daughter of a caliph. The glory of my father, his rank, and his sensibility, combat my feelings ; and my lover, who, in my eyes, is worthy of the lot of a king, is surely nothing else.—No more of that, said Namouna smartly, he is nothing but a cook ;—it is all he wants to be ; but, surely, there is nothing more amiable on earth.—There is happiness in every condition ; I despise greatness, when attended with uneasiness ; and I could be happier with the beautiful cook, than with all the kings of the east.—You are too deep in love, Namouna, replied Ilsetilsone.—One of us, said the old governess, must make the other merry, otherwise this palace would become a scene of sorrow. Take care of yourself, and don't walk a living mummy in Bagdad.

The chearfulness of the governess diverted the princess, and quieted her impatience. Simousthapha,

moustapha, on the other hand, amused himself in preparing something new, in order the more agreeably to surprise his mistress. The services on gold and precious vases were to succeed those of silver and china; the house was filled with perfumes; every thing in it announced elegance and neatness; all the slaves were in motion; and still more would have been done, should it not have excited too great a curiosity. At last the two days were finished;—the hour arrived. Iffetilsone proceeded from the bath, in all her charms; and added to their lustre that of the most splendid and most exquisite dress. Thus adorned, she descended into the streets of Bagdad, attended by all her slaves."

As she approached the shop of her lover, she went into all that she met with. Her retinue, dispersed among the different warehouses, were eager to view and to examine every thing; and, when she imagined that their attention was sufficiently engaged, she immediately, along with Namouna, entered Simoustapha's house, where nobody was left but the mute.

Early in the morning, the cook had warned his people, that it would be prudent for them, before the caliph's daughter should traverse the streets of Bagdad, to go and dine on the other side of the Jalla and the Ilphaza, and take with them



them whatever should be necessary. This order, accompanied with a few pieces of gold, was very agreeable to them.

Ilsetilsone passed from the shop into the garden; the mute made a sign; and, in a moment, the two lovers were in each others arms.

Whilst fruits and different sorts of provisions are served up, her curiosity determines her to examine the different beauties of the garden, and the order of the house, to which taste and elegance appeared to have contributed more than riches. But, when the princess was in the inner part of it, every thing she saw occasioned a new surprise; every thing there displayed the most uncommon luxury.

“ You are about, my princess,” said Simoustapha to her, “ to enter a room which nobody hath seen before, and where I never set my foot. It was designed but for one person, and I durst never flatter myself that she would ever embellish it with her presence.

These words excited in Ilsetilsone an extraordinary emotion. She was quite surprised to find so much riches in a cook’s house. She now went to see an apartment still more superb, prepared for only one person; and every thing told her that she was the one.

The door of the apartment opened; the parlour which immediately appeared, was more richly

richly ornamented than any in Bagdad, and was fit for the reception of the greatest sovereign. They now pass into another magnificent room embellished with sofas and cushions of *brocade*. The princess could not help expressing the greatest astonishment. Namouna opened her eyes. Every thing she sees is the object of her surprise, and the cause of her silence. She durst touch nothing; but stood speechless amid so much riches.

“For whom,” said the princess, “is this apartment designed?” “For no other,” replied the amorous youth, “but the most beautiful and charming of princesses.” “Ah!” exclaimed she, “Heaven and Mahomet grant that she may enjoy it!” In saying that, she fell into a swoon; but, being carried upon cushions, she soon recovered. “Who has placed me here?” said she; it is myself.—“It is he,” replied Namouna; “every thing here has been designed for you; command like a sultaneess.”—“Will you then stay here with me, Simoussapha?” replied the princess.—“He who has devoted his whole life to you cannot rob you of one moment of it.”

What finely turned compliments! said Namouna, stepping hastily out of the room:—The eunuch and I go to lay the cloth.

Our lovers were alone; passion transported them;

them; but duty constrained them; the most delicate speeches were mingled with the tenderest caresses, and promises of mutual affection. The desire of binding the knot of their eternal felicity; the idea of difficulties which seemed to exclude all hope; tears extorted by fear, and sweetened by hope—such was the picture they exhibited.

“My dear Simoustapha!” said the tender Isfetilsone, “you appear to possess many treasures; and you seem fitted to enjoy them in the noblest manner; who then has obliged you to descend to the condition you now hold?”—“Oh! my princess, I have been reduced to it by an irresistible power. I have devoted my life to him: I have sworn in your presence the most scrupulous and blind obedience; let us not now think upon the past; let us consider the future. I cannot live but in the hope of possessing you.”—“And I, my dear Simoustapha, in the assurance of seeing you;—but, shall we accomplish it?”

“That does not belong to you, my dear princess,” replied Simoustapha. “Assured of your heart, it is my part to preserve its peace with the possession of it; and I will triumph over every opposition; and death alone shall disunite us.”

At the same instant the key was heard turning; it was Namouna; she entered rejoicing. "Let us go, my dears," said she, "dinner is on the table; the hours pass quickly; we should employ those few well that remain."

In saying that she cast a glance upon the two lovers; Simouftapha, seated by his mistress, was kissing her hand, and bathing it in his tears.

"Won't you come, said she, from spending your time in crying? You are incorrigible, I see it well. Come, good Celadon! You have drowned your reason in tears, you will find it again in the entertainment which is prepared for you."

The lovers went under the canopy: expression of sentiment was painted in their eyes, and their lips were the interpreters of it; their looks were mingled with caresses; anticipating cares; delicate attentions;—all bore the character of the tenderest love, and the strongest passion.

"Very well!" said Namouna; "extasy and admiration have succeeded to tears. Let us go.—Some sighs still! Let one but contemplate your charms, and, when he thinks he has said all, there will remain much to say."

The beautiful Ifetilsone smiled at her governess;

ness; and the lovers rise to seek a place of solitude in the artificial retreats of the garden.

“ Dear Simoustapha,” said she, “ the hour of our parting is at hand; I am your’s for life; assure me by a fresh oath that you will always be mine.”

“ I swear,” said Simoustapha, “ by Heaven, and the Divine Prophet! Accept that ring, which is the seal of my promise! That diamond shall sooner melt than my heart change the object of its affection.”

The lustre and beauty of the diamond excited afresh the admiration and curiosity of the princess: “ You will not leave me,” said she to her lover, “ till you have satisfied me with regard to your fortune? Mine, for the future, is connected with it. Your riches astonish me more and more. The nobleness of your carriage, the genius, the graces, the talents, the effects of a superior education, all strike me with surprise, and discover a particular exertion of providence in your favour.—Young still, and surrounded with slaves in the very midst of dissipation, under what shield pray do you walk? and by what fantastic caprice are you reduced to personate a character so unsuitable to your condition? Dispel my doubts, if possible, and crown my felicity by the declaration which I require of you.”



“ I am alone, it is true,” replied Simousta-pha; “ no person here takes care of me; but I once had a master who instructed me in all the arts and sciences; I learned under him both to understand and to think: That respectable philosopher inspired me with the principles of those virtues which now adorn me.

“ Let not your tenderness be alarmed with regard to my resources or my conduct. I am a stranger in Bagdad; I have, however, relations; but do not ask me the cause of my leaving them, nor the discovery of my real condition: My secrets shall soon be declared to you; I shall have nothing to conceal from her whom I regard more than my life, and to whom a sacred tie shall soon unite me forever.” —“ Ah! when shall that happy day come?” said the princess with a tender uneasiness. —“ The means are in my power,” replied Simousta-pha; “ the use of them requires great prudence; the consequences may be dangerous.” —“ Ah! my dear Simousta-pha, to me let all the danger belong.” —As she pronounced these words, in came Namouna, who was seeking her. “ Let us go, Madam,” said she to her, “ it is time to join your company again. Here is a private gate, of which the mute has given me the key; let us go out by it, and, on making a circuit, we shall appear to be coming from

from such a distance, that it will be impossible to guess where we have spent our time." The lovers were obliged to comply.

The princess soon joined some of her company. "What are you doing here?" said Narmouna angrily. "Separated from those who ought to take care of you, what if any mischief had befallen you!"—"You are right," said Ilsetilfone, "to be afraid lest youth should expose itself." The young slaves crowd around their mistress, and the princess approached the body of her train, while none of them durst separate themselves from her.

Haroun and Zobeida waited with impatience the return of their dear daughter. As soon as the caliph was apprised of her coming to the palace, he repaired to the apartment of the princess, to wait for her there, and to enjoy in person the amusements he had prepared for her.

She at length appeared, and the caliph could not express his satisfaction on account of the change which he had occasioned. He embraced his daughter with transport: Every thing concurred to increase his satisfaction; Ilsetilfone supported by love and hope, assumed new existence; and that happy father charged himself with carrying so agreeable intelligence to Zobeida.



Simouftapha took the box, which was covered with paper, and inscribed with the following instructions of his wife preceptor.

“ My dear child, never mistake with regard to the choice of the object which is to form your happiness; examine it in all its circumstances; distrust appearances by all means. If you shall ever happen to enter into such engagements as will involve you in misfortune to get free from them, and if otherwise your conscience do not reproach you with respect to the means which you shall employ in order to obtain the object of your consolation, then apply to my box; put it on your table, bow before it respectfully, and say to it,” “ My dear box! my only hope, grant me your protection, in the name of the friend who gave you to me, and assist me in my distress.—I conjure you in the name of your mistress.”

“ The box will open. Summon up all your firmness, that you may not shrink at the sight of the frightful object which will appear before you; and, whatever it be, command it. You will learn from it what it can do in your favour; but, my dear child! that step is not without danger; the slightest indiscretion may draw upon you the greatest misfortunes. Terrible trials ensue; and, if you sink under them, the present and my friendship will prove fatal to you.”

“ O,

"O, my dear Benelab!" said Simouftapha, after having read that writing attentively, "your pupil feels all the value of the kindness you indulged him with, in leaving him this precious treasure, and the sage instructions. When the fire of love had inflamed my soul, and when, at the hazard of my life, I wished to surmount every obstacle, you came to my relief,—O, my worthy master! I owe to you the happiness of my life: You have recovered me the object of my flame; and, without your generous cares, inaccessible walls would have separated me from her;—still I would have transgressed the law of the prophet in leaping over them, and would have lost the object of my love, without the hope of ever uniting our hearts.

Hitherto, my dear Benelab! your spirit has watched over my conduct, your counsels have been my law;—assist your friend, and favour me in a dangerous attempt, which I am now about to make. I am to be exposed to dreadful trials; but O, my sage friend! he who, enamoured of the most beautiful of Nature's works, was able to command himself, and to respect while he loved, is worthy of some confidence. His wisdom and his success were your work, and you will gloriously finish what you have begun."

After

After this invocation, Simoustapha rose full of courage; he took up the box, tore off the little seal, and articulated forcibly all the words of the charm, of which he had the form.

All on a sudden, the flame of lamps twinkled forth, and sparkled. A noise like distant and majestic peals of thunder, the harbingers of storms, was now heard.—The box opened of its own accord.—Nothing appeared to come out of it. However, a black vapour rose in the cabinet, and filled, by degrees, the space between the floor and the ceiling.

At length, the vapour was dissipated: A shapeless mass grew up, and the eye was terrified at the sight of an object so hideous and frightful. As the phantom was unfolding itself, the courageous Simoustapha familiarises himself with it. “Who are you? who sent you hither?” were the questions he proposed to that monstrous form.

“My mistress,” answered the horrible figure. “I must obey the commands of Benalab, and the man whom she protects.”

“Who is your mistress?” replied Simoustapha. “I charge you tell me her name.”

“I will not obey you without her permission,” returned the figure.

“Go back, then, to her,” said Simoustapha; “tell her that the friend of the sage Benalab is  
ambitious



ambitious of treading in the steps of his master, and of meriting, by his conduct, the high protection with which he has honoured him; and desires to know the name of the power which interposes in his favour, that he may render it the homage which is due." The genius disappeared, and returned like a flash of lightening.

"Your demand was graciously accepted," said he; "you are the only pupil of Benalab, and he regards you as another self. My mistress is the queen of the genii; she is named Setelpedour'-ginatille, which signifies the Star of the Seven Seas. She sent me hither, with necessary power, in order to execute all your commands. As my form may appear forbidding to you, I have orders from her, who has me in her power, to assume that shape which shall please you most."

"Assume," said Simouftapha, "the shape of Jemal, the first slave who was engaged in my service, and whom I have had the misfortune to lose."—I will obey you cheerfully, said the genius.

Then he returned to the bottom of the cabinet, and dissolved again into vapours, and formed a cloud, from which a young man, of an agreeable figure, was seen to issue. "What wish you now?" said the newly transformed figure. "I wish you were more devoted to me than ever Jemal was."—Whenever you have oc-  
casion

caſion for my ſervice, you have only to touch the box, and call me ; I wait your commands."

" I love the charming Iſetiltſone, the calif's daughter. She returns my affection ; but, can I be united to her without the conſent of our relations, and under the ſovereign auſpices of the queen of the genii ? Go, Jemal, and remember my happineſs depends upon the answer you bring : He ſaid, and the genius diſappeared.

Simouſtapha then recalled to his memory the ſage leſſons he had received from his inſtructor. " In the ſituation in which your love is at preſent," ſaid Benalab to him, " the aſſiſtance of the genii may perhaps be neceſſary, but do not neglect, however, to contribute yourſelf too to your own happineſs ; ſuperlative aid will be unavailing, if you neglect to co-operate with it by all the means which you can employ. I left you riches, which will more than ſupply your neceſſities." Simouſtapha poſſeſſed in reality the moſt precious productions of Arabia ; but there were wanting women to ſerve the princeſs, and the means of finding in Bagdad ſuch as had no eyes, tongue, nor ears ; who could obey in the twinkling of an eye, who could be always active in the night, and inviſible during the day ; without the myſterious aid of the box, the attention of Jemal, or the protection of the fairy.

In

In this embarrassment Jemal arrived, and gave an account of his mission.

Our sovereign, said he, recognizes in your conduct the effect of the salutary principles of the wise Benalab; she has considered your plan, and you will have it in your power to marry the princess Ifsetilsone to-morrow evening, by calling the stars to witness your union. I have orders to repair to the palace of the caliph at the close of the day, to lull the watch asleep, to carry off the princess, and to convey her hither.

First of all, said Simoustapha, present yourself to my slaves under the name of Jemal, whose loss they have often heard me regret: You will take along with you four of the youngest, the only slaves who recollect Jemal: They will caress you much, and receive you kindly. You will find too upon the table a state of what you have to do in order to furnish the large room. You will find the key of the cupboard, where I put the contents, which I give you the charge of. My four little slaves shall perform your orders; but, in order to fulfil mine, will you be able to provide me with females proper for the service of the princess?

"Do you want a hundred?" replied the genii, "of the most beautiful who surround the throne

throne of Setelpedour'ginatille? Your orders shall be their laws."

"I am ashamed of his goodness," said Simoustapha; "six are sufficient."—You shall have them, said the genius.

The new Jemal is recognised by the slaves of the house: The four youngest load him with caresses: They are of opinion that this favourite domestic should be restored to his former privileges, and that he should forthwith be intrusted with the orders of his master. He informed them, that Simoustapha would soon occupy the great room; and that he, and his four little slaves, were about to make every preparation for that purpose.

Next morning Simoustapha got up before sun-rise; set to work: All the dishes he was to furnish for this festival were to be prepared with his own hand. He is the more difficult to please with respect to the taste, in order to gain the good graces of the person whom he was to flatter.

Notwithstanding this, the hours roll on; the day-star is about to end its course. Simoustapha entered the bath. In a little, he sets off the graces of his person, by the lustre of a splendid dress. Art and nature conspired to embellish this master-piece of their work; de-

fire and love animate their looks : Every thing contributes to the happiness of his most affectionate mistress.

—Already had the evening shades fallen upon Bagdad, when Simoustapha caused his room be illuminated, and a magnificent entertainment be served up, which preposessed both the sight and smell in its favour. The four slaves retired to execute the orders of Jemal : he himself appeared to follow them ; but the genius, having other things to do, flew to the palace of Haroun.

Ilsetilsone slept ill, as she had heard nothing of Simoustapha. Namouna had lost her temper, and begun to scold : The slaves and eunuchs had proposed to themselves a joyful night ; but all on a sudden they became quite languid ; the word dies away upon their lips ; their feet stagger, and become unable to support them ; the easy-chairs crash with the weight of their bodies : The eunuchs upon watch feel the same drowsiness ; and the enchantment of the fairy diffuses a soporiferous charm throughout the whole palace.

When all were asleep, the servant of Setelpedour, according to the orders of Simoustapha, lifted the princess, and carried her, without the least noise, into the room that had been prepared for her.

The

The glimmering of the lamps, upon which an extraordinary wind blew violently, announced the arrival of the genius; the princess is placed upon the nuptial bed; and Jemal appearing, said to Simouftapha, "Master, are your orders executed? Do you want nothing more with your slave?"—"Where are the females who are to serve the princess?"—"Every thing is ready, answered the genius; and, if your highness will condescend to pass into the neighbouring room, they will soon appear." Simouftapha immediately complied. In an instant, a ball of fire darts forth its shining rays; the eye is dazzled with it; in a little the lustre diminishes, and leaves in its room six young people, equally distinguished by their beauty and dress. In their hands they carried a musical instrument. Hardly could they distinguish these ravishing objects, till the whole vision bowed down before Simouftapha. He ordered Jemal to employ these new slaves in making the necessary preparations; entered into the room where the princess was sleeping, and shut the door upon her.

He approached the object of his whole desire: Oh, how worthy she appeared of the sacrifices he had made to obtain her! The prince was so inflamed with love, that he wished to awake the object of it; but



the tranquillity and happiness which appeared in her face hindered him from interrupting her sweet repose. Alas! said Simoustapha, I shall never perhaps have it in my power to make her so happy as she may be in this dream; yet he could not resist the impulse of the moment; he risked a kiss upon her rosy lips: the magic of love destroyed the charm of the genius, and Ilsetilsone opened her beautiful eyes.

"Ha! what a transporting dream," cried she.—"It is not a dream," said the amorous Simoustapha, "you are at the house of him who shall be your husband in a little."

"My husband!" replied Ilsetilsone, surprised at the enchantment, "by what extraordinary favour?"

"Be not surprised, Queen of my soul! A decree of heaven hath designed us for one another. A power which you are ignorant of, and of which I know but little, hath this day re-united us, and it shall be for life. But, before you enter into these solemn vows, learn the fate of Simoustapha, and view the heir of the great Hilmar, sovereign of the Indies."

At these words Simoustapha took off his turban, and showed a ribband set with pearls and precious stones, surpassed by a diamond whose lustre dazzled the eyes: And upon the diamond

mond were engraven these words, *Given by the caliph Haroun-Alraschid to his dear Simouftapha, son of his brother Hilmar, great king of the Indies.*

What a discovery for the affectionate Iſetifone! If her paſſion could be increaſed, ſhe would become proud of her choice. Glory and ambition conſummated a happineſs, which ſeemed at firſt to depend only upon love.

Simouftapha, on the other hand, enjoyed the pleaſure of having it in his power to remove an error which his diſguiſe ſeemed to confirm.

“But why,” ſaid ſhe then, “did you ſubmit to your preſent profeſſion?”

To tell you plainly, it was love, ſaid the prince. Now, added he, it only remains to take the celeftial beings to witneſs our union, waiting, however, till our parents confirm it by their conſent. May you, Mahomet, may the Conſtellations, and may the Star of the Seven Seas, (putting his arms acroſs her breaſt), be the guardians of our oaths! May your divine influence depart from us, if we ever break the ſacred engagements we have this day come under! On a ſudden the heavens answered the invocation by the voice of thunder; an inviſible arm diffuſed obſcurity; the ſtars withdrew their luſtre, and our lovers were alone.

Silence and obscurity had reigned for a considerable while, when at length Iftifone, curious to know still more of the story of her lover, asked him, what motives had induced him to conceal his illustrious birth? For, as their parents were allied, both by friendship and political interest, these circumstances taken together, might have contributed to such an advantageous alliance.

There is not, said Simouftapha, so great a disparity of rank between us as you imagine: Perhaps the caliph, among all the sovereign princes to whom he hath refused your hand, has not numbered one with whom an alliance would have been as suitable, in every respect, as with our family, and as well prepared by the bonds of an ancient and steady friendship.

Our family was born in the errors of idolatry; but thanks to the zealous attentions of Haroun, the viceroy of God, and the right arm of his great prophet upon earth, we have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, by studying and understanding the divine Alcoran.

This sage commander of the faithful hath always watched over us like an indulgent father. My father and my mother were always mentioning his kind attentions to us, and their attachment to him. — He has a  
most

most beautiful princess, said they; ah! if he would grant us for our daughter-in-law the charming Ifetilsone; but other monarchs have sought her in vain. He loves her too dearly, and he will never consent to her forming any connection that will take her from him.

These conversations made an impression upon my soul; my whole thoughts centered upon you: My father had brought to court a Persian philosopher named Benalab, who was to have the charge of my education, and to instil into my heart the principles of virtue. At the same time, he was to adorn my mind with that uncommon knowledge with which he was endowed.

Now and then Benalab was absent, in quest of discoveries relating to those important studies in which he was engaged. He used to go in search of plants upon the mountains of Armenia. My parents always celebrated your charms and talents; and expressed their regret at the impossibility which they foresaw in forming so proper an alliance. In the meantime, they thought of seeking another for me. I retired to my apartment mightily perplexed; but scarcely had I gone to bed, when, in the middle of a profound sleep, you appeared to me in a dream; and you had the very same appearance then as the first time I saw you; I awoke, but

a strange voice pronounced your name distinctly.

“ Judge, my dear Ilsetilsone, from the situation in which I was placed, the impression that your image made upon me. Not daring to confess my passion, I gave myself entirely up to it. It soon wasted me; medicine was administered to me in vain; and I was about to fall a victim to my disease.

“ Benalab having returned from Armenia, examined me, and, after having considered the nature of my complaint, approached me.—

“ Dear prince,” whispered he in my ear, “ I know your disorder perfectly;—Ilsetilsone is the cause of it.”

At these words, a sudden blush covered my cheeks. “ Be of good cheer,” said my tutor to me, “ your disease is not desperate; take courage; you are made for one another. Allow me to direct you; I shall put you upon a method of seeing her, and obtaining her hand.”

“ Hope having re-animated my vigour, I assumed, as it were, a new life. Benalab proposed a sea voyage, as necessary for my recovery, and caused equip a vessel, of which he himself was to be pilot. In order to comfort my parents on this occasion, Benalab showing them a rose-bush, almost entirely dried up, took a shovel; collected sand and earth; mixed them;

put

put them to the root of the bush, and poured upon the earth some drops of a certain elixir which he had in his pocket. "This plant will spring up," said he to them: The more it shall be loaded with leaves and flowers, the more ought ye to believe in the recovery of your son. The angel of death would strike him here. Elsewhere he shall live. Confide in Benalab."

"The rose-bush recovered its verdure. Benalab having become my governour, might take from my father's treasures whatever he judged necessary for me; to this he joined his particular treasure, some parts of which you have already admired. We embarked; landed on the coasts of the caliph your father, and came to reside for some time at Bassora.

"Benalab, the moment we landed, sent all our Indian slaves back with the vessel which had brought us over. We settled at Bassora, and deliberated how I might live at Bagdad without being known, and what profession I should follow, in order that I might see you and become acquainted with you, concealing my rank and condition. That of a cook appeared the most proper to Benalab. By purchasing very expert cooks at Bassora, he was sure, by means of his elixirs, of giving such a relish to whatever we prepared, as that we might promise



mise ourselves a sale, and a preference corresponding to our wishes."

Let us now do justice to the schemes of the wife Benalab. A cook soon made greater noise in Bagdad and at court than any other personage, how illustrious soever. I saw our reputation increase every day; and, after having worked for the principal people of the state, I flattered myself that I should be employed by Haroun and you, when I had the misfortune to lose my wife governour.

Hope would have fled with him, had not Namouna, who thought that I did not know her, come herself, and been the happy mean of bringing us together.

During this whole conversation of Simousta-pha, Ilsetilsone, scarcely able to breathe, had not power to interrupt him. "At last," said she, our "union is nothing but the work of love, and the decree of the holy prophet! Ah! how sweet it is to be subject to the laws of the same destiny! But, explain to me how, since I fell asleep in my father's palace, I find myself here in your arms? How lively soever the sensations are which I feel, I consider them only as the effect of a vision. This appears to me so extraordinary.—Then Simousta-pha explained to the princess the use he made of the box of Benalab, and expatiated upon the aid which he expected from it afterwards.

Night

Night had finished the half of her career, when, upon a signal agreed to between the Indian prince and the genius, the latter lighted all the lamps in the twinkling of an eye. At the same time, the door which led to the parlour opened, and a concert, formed by the union of the most agreeable voices, was heard.

What new prodigy is this ! said the princess ; it is your slaves celebrating my happiness, said Simouftapha.—Could my slaves be here?—Could they know any thing?—Those who are here are not known to you, and could not betray you.

Instantly she rose, and found under her hand a splendid dress. Simouftapha conducted her into the parlour, where a sumptuous collation was prepared.

The six slaves prostrated themselves before the princess, and were eager to serve her. She had lost her appetite since her last walk in Bagdad ; but, as every thing was prepared by the hands of her lover, she was not averse to honour the feast. Music and dancing embellished this festival, and the slaves exerted themselves in charming the leisure moments of this happy pair. The princess had need of repose. Simouftapha conducted her back into the apartment she had left. The door shut, and the lamps were extinguished anew.

They

They were both still asleep, when the genius, warned of the return of the morning by the crowing of the cock, lifted up the princess, and transported her to the palace of the caliph.

After he restored her to her former condition, he removed the charm which held every body asleep; each of them shifted a little, and ended their slumbers in a more convenient posture.

Already had the sun finished a part of his course; and Ilsetilsone was still in her slumbers. Thrice had the old governess drawn the curtains. I dare not interrupt her repose, said she, with a low voice; sleep, my beautiful angel!

At length, the two stars which regulated the life of the Indian princes shone forth with all their lustre. Namouna approached them; "How beautiful you are, my charming princess! have you slept on a bed of roses, that you awake more beautiful than Aurora?"

"It is because I have had an agreeable dream."—"Have you seen Simoustapha?"—"Yes, Namouna, I have seen him, and much to my joy."—"Was he as grave as usual?"—"Not at all."—"So much the better for you, my princess; Will you dine then with a good appetite to-day? I am going to procure a dish from Simoustapha."

The

The old lady ran to the cook. "I am not so happy," said she to herself, "as to have such a dream; 'tis a fine thing to be young!—Quick, quick," said she, when she arrived, "your princess has slept the whole night; she has thought on you; she has recovered her appetite; give me something for her."

Simoustapha saw that Namouna knew nothing of what had happened. "Take these dishes, good Namouna; tell your charming mistress that she has no need to eat much this morning, she will sup the better for it at night."

The old lady wished to enter into conversation with him; but Simoustapha politely excused himself, and dismissed her.

Matters were in this situation, when a cloud translated Jemal into the azure plain, where he was to give an account of what had been done the night before.

As soon as Setelpedour'ginatille saw him, speak, Kauffak! said she to him, hast thou executed my orders in favour of the dear pupil of my beloved Benalab?

Great queen! replied Kauffak, I have done what I could.

"Do you remember," answered the fairy, "why you were shut up in the box, the frightful figure with which you were invested, and

wherefore you were so justly chastised? Act faithfully henceforward, and speak the truth. Are the young princes married? What think you of their union?"

"The marriage is over. Nothing equals the virtues and the beauty of this happy couple; and it would be impossible to find their match in the whole empire of Ginnistan: You see how I admire them.

"If Ilfetilfone eclipses all the stars of heaven in brightness, Simoustapha may be compared to the sun; but what particularly distinguishes them, are the qualities of their heart and understanding, which they unite in a most eminent degree."

"Thou knowest him well, Kauffack," replied the queen, "admire him, that thou mayest at length learn to love him. I recommend that couple to thee, serve them faithfully. I want to see them this night; thou must bring them to me as soon as they shall be asleep; and, after I shall have proved thy conduct, I will permit thee to appear for the future under the form and name of Jemal, which thou hast received from the pupil of Benalab."

The genius went away satisfied. Setelpedour was confounded: Ah! what, said she, are innocence and love unknown in my dominions? and are they only to be found upon the earth?

I could not believe it!—How I desire to see this mortal, so beautiful, so virtuous, and so sensible!—How happy is Ilsetilsone in having captivated a soul like his!”

Thus spoke the queen of the genii: She had till now kept her liberty; the very thought of a mortal endangered it. She was going, however, to run the risk, when Jemal was to have executed the last orders he had received.

Ilsetilsone had learned from Namouna that she was to have an interview with her lover that night. Night approached, more desired than the beautiful day; the charming princess sought repose, in order to enjoy a hope which she had no fear of being disappointed of. Soon the soporiferous vapour spread around her. She perceived its symptoms, and desired its effect; the palace is thrown into a deep sleep afresh. Jemal had appeared, and had already carried off the princess to her spouse, where every thing was ready for her reception.

The dishes were prepared, the concert was begun, the apartment was most magnificently embellished. But what can luxury and their efforts add to the pleasures that spring from mutual love? If they were to die of love, without hope of ever being united, they might live at present without so much ado.



The hour of repose came. Simouftapha tenderly invited the princess to give herself up to him; and the young slaves put every thing in order for that purpose.

A great many believed that all the nights of the pair, whom love alone united, were to be alike. What followed, however, proved the contrary.

Hardly were Simouftapha and the princess upon their cushions, when the genius threw them into a profound sleep, and transported them into the palace of the queen of the genii.

Setelpedour waited for them with impatience, and made them both sit down upon the most magnificent sofas. Her first attention was paid to Ilsetilsone; for she wished to see if her beauty came fully up to the encomiums she had heard lavished upon it; she found, however, that every thing exceeded the praises of Jemal.

But, when she came to examine Simouftapha, she was persuaded that nothing upon earth was either to be compared to him, or worthy of him. By believing that she had only given herself up to the sentiment of admiration, and by concealing the emotions by which she was agitated, that the genii of her court might not discover the violence of her passion, she allowed herself to be carried too far.

far. "Oh! most beautiful of mortals!" exclaimed she, "how happy I esteem myself in having exerted my power for you!" She now took two kisses of Ilsetilsone, that she might have an apology for imprinting the most tender upon the lips of Simoustapha.

The queen of the genii experienced what happens to her equals, when they approach too near the dangerous ball of this earth. Setelpedour fell a prey to the ravages of her own element; but the effect had not yet dissipated every idea of beneficence conceived in favour of a rival, the consummating of whose happiness she was soon about to repent. She put a very splendid lace about her neck, and a ring upon her finger, whose diamond sparkled like the carbuncle; and, what enhanced the value of this jewel, the names of the happy pair were engraved in the inside of the ring.

Forthwith she twines a chain of diamonds in the tresses of the prince, and puts upon his finger a ring still more beautiful than the one she had given to the princess. She now caused two dresses be brought for each, embroidered with rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, distributed with such art, that they imitated the variety of flowers.

When she had thus distinguished herself by her magnificence and kindness, she is eager to

obtain her compensation from the lips of the beautiful Simoustapha. Having thus gratified her curiosity, and part of her desires, she recalled the genius.

“Jemal,” said she to it, “exert yourself, and transport the spouses upon this sofa to the apartment from which you took them. You must take care that the one which they have occupied be placed somewhere else; you must put these two dresses before them, and observe them till they awake, that you may afterwards give an account of what passes.”

The genius obeys: The spouses are at Bagdad, in the apartment of the prince of the Indies: The brightness of the lamps is redoubled; the influence of the magic sleep is broken off. Simoustapha and Ifetilsone open their eyes; both are dazzled with the lustre of their dress; they are struck with the magnificence of everything around them.

Simoustapha takes the box; the genius waits his orders: “Jemal, speak, I command you! Whence is this abundance of riches?”

From the hand that hath favoured your union, replied the genius.—To-morrow, added the prince, you must carry her the tokens of our gratitude. If two hearts, entirely devoted to the will of the queen, can add to her happiness, you must present the homage of ours to her.

Jemal

Jemal disappeared.—Our lovers got immediately rid of the treasures which confined them. Ease is necessary to happy love.—Simouftapha saw nothing in this attention of the queen of the genii, but a disposition to prevail upon the caliph to approve of their union. At length both, very agreeably engaged, came to forget their riches; and the remainder of the night rolled on in a happiness which knew no care.

The last hour was come, when Ifetilsone signified to her lover the happiness that she would feel in seeing him dressed in the robes of his benefactress. “I will obey, treasure of my life! answered the prince; my whole care is to please you; but, let nothing here conceal from my eyes the charms whose power transports and ravishes me.” Simouftapha is adorned with his superb dress.—Ifetilsone is highly pleased with it. “Mine,” said she, “is useless to me at present; for, were I to display this pomp in my father’s palace, I should excite a curiosity which it would be impossible for me to gratify.”

As she had finished these words, the fore-runners of sleep seized upon her.—Simouftapha felt the same sensations; they have only time to throw themselves upon a sofa, without putting off their dresses. The princess was already asleep, and the genius conducted her into the palace of the caliph.

Jemal

Jemal immediately flew to Setelpedour, and gave her an account of the manner in which her presents had been received, and of the grateful acknowledgements of Simoustapha. He said even more, than the queen wished to hear.

Setelpedour was no more herself; from the moment she was captivated with Simoustapha, she fell a victim to passions, whose violence she had never known before. Jealousy began to wring her heart; she is astonished at her situation.—She, who till now had been engaged in governing the passions of others; she who had never felt the stroke of them, and who had been always insensible to the charms of the genii of the empire of Ginnistan; “I condescend,” said she, “to love a man!—But Simoustapha is the pupil of Benalab; he is himself the model of virtue, and wisdom:—What one of my equals could have thought it below her to win the affections of the great Solomon? Our queen went to visit him from the most remote regions of the north\*.”

Whilst Setelpedour spoke thus, the genius waited her orders. “Return to your master,” said she; “and, visible or invisible, be always at his command. If you perceive in him the least desire of becoming

\* It was a received opinion, that the queen of Sheba, who came to court the favour of Solomon, was a female Genie, and queen of the celestial visions.

becoming acquainted with me, and of doing me homage, encourage it, and bring him to me immediately. My frontiers are guarded by beings more disgusting than you were formerly. But I am just going to order these frightful soldiers to be removed, and the stations to be filled up, so as nothing may appear terrifying.

The genius having bowed to its sovereign, returned to the apartment of Simoussapha, and found him upon the sofa, where the effects of the magic sleep had detained him. It awakes him, and makes its appearance.—It brings him a message, in order to induce him to make choice of a more peaceful situation.

The prince opened his eyes ;—Ifetilsone had disappeared ;—he saw nothing around him but the magnificent presents with which he was loaded ; and, without which, he would have believed the whole to have been but a fine dream. Upon seeing these, however, he is animated with a gratitude which calls to his remembrance the greatest benefits. He burns with impatience to go and do respectful homage to the exalted being, whose goodness and power he admires. He touches the box, and the genius waits his orders.

“ Jemal,” said he to it, “ if my request is not impertinent, I command thee to conduct me to  
the



the feet of my benefactress, the queen of the genii."

"I will obey, answered the genius, "the master of the enchanted box, and the favourite of the brilliant Star of the Seven Seas which divide the earth."

Simoustapha, after the bath, adorned himself with the riches he had got from the generous fairy, and gave himself up to be conducted by the genius.

Ginnistan is a very remote empire; it surrounds us, however, on every side. It consists of spaces, which cannot be compared with the small one that we inhabit. In a few minutes, the Indian prince is over them, and is placed at the entrance to the dwelling of Setelpedour.

The queen appeared to him; and, although he was struck with her beauty, he did not lose sight of decorum, but wished to have kneeled upon the earth. She, however, raised him hastily, took him by the hand, and conducted him to her palace, having first made him walk through the gardens, where wonders of every sort surprised and enchanted him.

Simoustapha, affected at the sight of so many enjoyments united, felt a sensation highly pleasing to Setelpedour. "Man!" says she within herself, "ah! most admirable of mortals! may the

the beauties thou meetest with here make thee forget all those which thou ledest upon the earth !

At length, almost without speaking, the queen and her new guest came to the bason, ornamented with three hundred and sixty-six figures of animals, all differing from one another. Each of them was the emblem of one of the days of the year. Jasper and porphyry were the materials made use of in constructing them ; and they always spouted out liquors the most agreeable to drink.

The table for dinner was furnished in this place, under a canopy of roses and jessamines.—Sophas, covered with green turf, presented commodious seats. The violet and lilly served for carpets. Amid such a profusion of beauties, how sumptuous must be the repast !

Invisible beings brought and removed the courses. Nothing was seen but the beautiful hands of Setelpedour, which were as ready to anticipate the taste of her guests, as her eyes to perceive.

The Indian prince appeared disconcerted ; but a more animated picture is presented to his view. An amphitheatre, which was opposite to him, is peopled in the twinkling of an eye. Six hundred genii of each sex, seated upon green turf, began a concert worthy of the queen

queen of the fairies, and fitted to charm mortals. Simouftapha is struck with admiration.

You see, said Setelpedour to him, the pleasures we enjoy here. If you find any charms in this place, ah! my dear Simouftapha, the heart which offers them shall always study to vary them.

Saying that, the queen left the table, and set out for her palace. Every thing there was of a variegated gold and azure colour. She made Simouftapha sit down on a sofa, and the queen of the genii having placed herself beside him, spoke to this purpose.

“ Dear prince, I have no occasion to be reserved: I love you; I have your happiness at heart, and mine is interwoven with it. You were the favourite and pupil of the wise Benalab; he drew my eyes on your destiny. From your earliest infancy, I have, without appearing, been the instrument of your happiness. To me you owed Ilsetilsone; I was delighted at your union with her, and I feel no jealousy on account of it; but, since I came to know you more particularly, I have conceived the tenderest affection for you. Your virtues, and the charms of your person, have made the queen of the genii the humble slave of love.”

Oh! adorable queen, said Simouftapha, I have not the vanity to pretend to so glorious a conquest.

conquest. Permit me to adore you, and serve you my whole life. To you I owe the happiness of being united to the daughter of the caliph; but, were the love that I have conceived for her, under your auspices, to permit me to offer you my heart, I am a Mussulman by the grace of God, and the holy prophet, and the beneficent care of the virtuous commander of the faithful. My happiness must therefore consist in obeying the law.

You exaggerate, my dear Simouftapha, replied the queen, both my pretensions towards you, and the rigour of the law. I don't wish to banish Ilsetilsone from your thoughts; love her always; she shall be the object of my kindness, as well as of your love. Mahomet has permitted more than one wife.

"I did not examine," said Simouftapha, "the conduct of the prophet; but, when Ilsetilsone was given entirely to me, we came under sacred and inviolable obligations."—"They will be no less so," replied the queen; "Ilsetilsone can neither be your enemy nor mine. Besides, in permitting me to love you, how can she charge me with ingratitude? In a word, dear prince, you have my heart, and can you refuse me part of your's, if it is not already wounded? Consider that, powerful as I am, I shall never exert my power but to turn it out

to your interest, and that she who implores you is the sovereign mistress of your destiny."—  
"Oh! my queen," said Simoustapha, "figure to yourself the distress of your slave, who finds it equally impossible to consent to or refuse your request."

Enough of that! dear prince, replied Setepedour; your own safety should now occupy your thoughts. I have furnished the proper means, for which you may afterwards find use. But I must tell you, that the box of Benalab exposes you to great dangers. It belonged formerly to Mamouk, an Egyptian magician, who made an ill use of it, by giving himself up to crimes. My justice hath therefore deprived him of it.

I abandoned this wretch to the rigour of his destiny. I chastised Kaussack, at present Jemal your slave, who by his low flattery ruined a corrupted master. I suppose, however, that this slave of my laws will never forget himself in your service. Mamouk is still alive, and has initiated in his art a son no less dangerous than himself. All Ginnistan curses him; but the wicked always find some favour; Mamouk is still powerful, and is continually endeavouring to recover the box which was given to Benalab. Take care then, that neither an Egyptian,  
tian,

tian, nor any thing from Egypt, enter your house.

Simoustapha could not find words to express his gratitude. He began, however, to weary; it was time for him to go home and receive his spouse. He endeavoured to represent to the queen the necessity of his departure, by regretting the joys he should be forced to forego.

My goodness, replied Setelpedour, follows my inclination, and costs me nothing. The riches which are here will lose their value when you are gone. Would you render them precious to me? come together with Ilsetilsone and enjoy them; and, from that moment, every thing here shall be truly dear in my sight: Come, and command in these places, and I shall be obeyed by all the genii who surround me.

Ah! Madam, replied Simoustapha, don't, though you love me, make me forget my duty: I must remember that I am the son of the king of the Indies, dearly beloved by my parents, and accountable to their subjects for the presumptive heir to the crown.

Adieu! my dear Simoustapha, said the queen, embracing him; adieu! prince, model of sovereigns! light of the world! and genius of every virtue!



The genius conducted Simouftapha to his house; and, though his heart melted with gratitude towards Setelpedour, his affections still concentrated upon Ifetilsone. He is busy preparing for her reception. The most exquisite fruits are upon the table; the pots are filled with new perfumes: The princess arrived in a magnificent dress which she had got in a present from Setelpedour: Simouftapha had kept his. The music plays; the repast begins; and, amid these enjoyments, they think of nothing but happiness.

In the mean while Simouftapha relates the voyage he had made to the palace of the fairy, describes the beauties he had seen there, and the kindness with which he had been loaded. He omits no circumstance; but his relation occasions neither suspicion nor jealousy.

While the princess saw every heart incline towards her lover, she considered it as a tribute which all celestial beings owed. When Simouftapha spoke of the precautions which he had engaged to take against Mamouk the Egyptian, the ancient possessor of the box, she wished that the prince would send back to the queen so dangerous a present: But, without its assistance, he must have renounced the pleasure of seeing her, and perhaps it might have been impossible to have induced the caliph to ratify their union.

All terrors gave way to such powerful motives. "At least," said she, "take care to defend yourself from the approach of these perfidious strangers. Shut both your gates and windows, even against the winds which may blow from Egypt."

Whilst she was thus endeavouring to confirm their repose, a cloud gathered in Ginnistan which was soon to disturb it.

As soon as the genius, the slave of the box, had transported the princess from the palace to the house of Simouftapha, and from thence to that of the caliph, and when the Indian prince had no farther orders to give him, he returns to his mistress, and gives her an account of all he had seen.

The genius gives a faithful account of the whole matter. "Never was a conjugal union so affecting! Never were two hearts so well fitted for mutual love! Never did two beings unite virtue and beauty in such an eminent degree! Never ———"

"Stop, wretch!" said the queen, "already are thy passions inflamed! Dost thou remember what thou didst when thou wast Kauflack, in the service of the cursed Egyptian? My finger engraved thy crime on thy guilty forehead. I will treat thee worse to-day, if thou prevaricatest: I will distort the features of thy face; I

will lengthen thy ears, and change thy hands into feet."

"Oh! my sovereign," said the genius, "your anger gives me more pain than your threatening terrifies me. I found that the beauty and virtue of Ifsetilsone commanded the greatest respect: Ah! how she deserves the love of Simouftapha!"

"He is too fond of her," replied Setelpedour; "and that has made him forget both his duty and interest. The only son of the king of the Indies lets not his father know his adventures: And, were it not the rose-bush which was renewed by Benalab, and of which I constantly renew the verdure, his parents would be plunged in sorrow. Jemal, thy young master must get rid of this dangerous charm; place thyself, without being seen, betwixt them, and diffuse an infectious odour round Ifsetilsone,—and—"

"Great queen, I will obey," said the genius, departing.—"Stop wretch!" said Setelpedour to it. Thou art too ready."

"Stop!" said she to it, having recollected herself a moment; "be more ready to do good than ill, if thou dost not wish to become a monster again.—I order thee now to take care that nothing bad happen the new-married couple."

Jemal

Jemal retired; he could not understand what his sovereign meant, and he believed that she wanted to try him. Setelpedour fell a victim to the violence of her passion. She imagined that she would get the better of it by sacrifices, and that she might be authorised to go on with this scheme; she instantly called Asmoncha, her first vizir, and having made him sit down at her side, she spoke to him thus:

“Yizir, no object having ever made an impression on my heart, till now I have been independent. But I am so no more. A mortal, superior to all others, is become master of my heart; it is Simoustapha, the son of the great king of the Indians.

“I know that the pride of the genii, my vassals, disdain man, because they generally make a joke of him. They have forgot that they all bowed the knee before the great Mahomet, who conquered my father, the powerful and immortal Kokopilefobe\*, who was stripped of his glory.

“Our sphere is limited: Of all created beings, man alone can extend his. The virtues of Simoustapha will raise him to the greatest eminence, and I wish to be partner of his hopes. If you have, as I believe, my prosperity

\* Kokopilefobe, one of the Arabian names of Lucifer.

rity and honour in view, I expect an advice from you worthy of your prudence and affection."

Whilst she was speaking, Asmonchar, with downcast eyes, appeared to be in a deep dream. At length, however, he broke silence: "Great queen! said he to her, your measures are always directed by your wisdom, and can only spring from a noble ambition: Here, at the same time, I see two difficulties.

"You have generously effected the match of the Indian prince and the daughter of the caliph; you have rendered it strong and indissoluble against yourself, by the rings that you have made them put on. Your satisfaction must depend on their agreement. We have laws digested by our sages, of which they themselves keep the records; they will decide, much better than I can, how far they can favour your views. It will also be more agreeable to enter into the connection which you propose, with the approbation of all your subjects, than with the advice of your minister alone, who is entirely devoted to your pleasure. I am therefore of opinion, that it may be proper to signify your intention to your divan, whom I shall assemble by your order."

Setelpedour, full of her scheme, and of the  
means

means of forwarding it, did not see into the designs of Asmonchar.

The vizir, full of hypocrisy, had no sooner received orders to call the assembly, than he went to Bahlisboull \*, the oldest and most wicked spirit in Ginnistan. Rage gave force and speed to his wings. He detested Bahlisboull; but he wished, above all things, to oppose to his sovereign a being who could divert her from a purpose which was more odious to him than to any other; for he was really the genius who was the greatest enemy to the human race. Besides, he could never hear the name of Mahomet, without flying into a violent passion; and their queen wished to marry a mussulman. He knew that, by a famous treaty which was made between Kokopilefobe and Mahomet, that the prophet had reserved all the progeny which sprung from marriages between the inhabitants of the earth, and those of Ginnistan.

Old Bahlisboull saw his grand-son approach him in a sort of astonishment. He informs him of the design of the queen. And indeed they had, for a long time, plotted her destruction.

“ I see,” said he to Asmonchar, “ that you are afraid of losing your own interest with her; the queen is not the only female who hath made an unequal match. She is the daughter  
of

\* Bahlisboull, the same with Beelzebub.



of the great Kokopilefobe ; and, in spite of us, ſhe may claim great freedom. But, with reſpect to the laws, you know me to be the depoſitory of them ; and, ſince I ſigned the treaty which was entered into with Mahomet, you need neither think to elude nor infringe it. Aſſemble the divan ; that is your duty.”

Aſmouchar returned. Bahliſboull, full of wickedneſs and ambition, now thinks of deſtroning the queen, of ruining the grand vizir, his own ſon, and of raiſing himſelf upon the ruins of the whole. The divan aſſembles : Setelpedour comes and takes her place ; all the genii bow before her ; and, when ſhe gives the ſignal, each riſes and takes his ſeat. They are ignorant of the motive of ſo ſolemn an aſſembly. Aſmonchar is ordered to lay the matter before them.

The vizir looks round him, and perceives a place empty. It is that which his great father Bahliſboull ſhould have filled. He then heſitates to break ſilence ; for he is afraid that the queen’s propoſal carry by the majority of voices ; for a great part of thoſe who were to vote were of her ſex, and, of conſequence, hostile to every law that might tend to bridle their liberty, and reſtrain their weakneſs. The reſt conſiſts of ſpirits who would be proud that they had it in their power to  
ſerve

serve the queen. Thus, this minister saw himself on the eve of being submitted to the laws of a man, and a Mussulman. He cursed Mahomet in the bottom of his soul, and felt all his strength forsake him at once. Setelpedour urged him to speak. He was beginning to stammer, when, on a sudden, old Bahlisboull arrived, borne by his ministers, who conducted him to the foot of the throne.

“ Pardon, oh my sovereign !” said this dangerous politician, “ my delay.—Time hath impaired my vigour ; age hath destroyed my wings :—I was grievously wounded by Michael in our first great combat ; and, in a body like mine, entirely weakened by age, the wounds are always fresh.”

Setelpedour received the excuse of the old genius, and ordered him to take his place. Asmonchar, encouraged by the presence of his grandfather, begins, and lays before them the subject upon which the queen wished to consult the divan.

The presence of Bahlisboull was a law to them ; they knew his inveterate hatred against the human race : They dreaded his wiles, his power, and cruelty. If there was a regulation in the empire difficult or obscure, they knew it to be from him.

Setelpedour addressed herself to the dangerous sage: "You, Bahlisboull, who have seen the *three \* reigns*; tell me if there has not been examples of a connection like that which I wish to form to-day?"

"Great queen! I could quote laws which would convince you all. I could even give myself as an example; I have existed since the time of the sublime genius, your grandfather; and, when we were thrown headlong from heaven, I fought his battles. He considered me as the oldest of his children.

"Need I recal to the remembrance of our illustrious chief the times of our ancient glory, and the dreadful blow that precipitated us, when we thought ourselves sure of enjoying it?"

"Tranquil and sovereign in our inaccessible abodes, they wished us to bow the knee to Mahomet. This daring innovator, whom we have seen sneak and reign by turns, seemed to be predestinated to the sceptre of the world; but, in becoming his disciples, we lost our empire. This affront appeared to us intolerable, and to submit mean. We gave over respecting as a beneficent being one who degraded us by an unjust

\* *The three reigns.* This alludes to the reign of Lucifer, before he was thrown down to the earth; to the reign of the same spirit, until Mahomet is said to have discouraged idolatry; and to the actual reign of Setelpedour.

unjust law; and, animated by just resentment, we took arms.

“ Great Kokopilefobe and I maintained an equal combat for some time against Michael and Gibrein. But, at length, our enemies, led on by Mahomet, fell upon us with fury. We were conquered, robbed, driven from our possessions; and it was with much ado we saved these gilded wings, without which we would have been dashed to pieces in our fall.

“ Invited to reign every where, we preferred this earth, and formed an alliance with the children of men, to people it in concert with them. Mahomet persecuted our new race, and destroyed it by a deluge.

Inexhaustible in our resources, we saw an immense crowd of people flourish anew; these we subjected to our laws. The earth was covered with our altars; she found it difficult to rear a sufficient number of victims for the sacrifices which were offered to us; and even human blood was not spared.

“ Provoked at our success, Mahomet became man. And, in order to put a stop to our career, he declared a war against us, more cruel than the former. He ransacked every thing, demolished our temples, overturned our images, annihilated our gods and our trophies. In short, we were put to the necessity of engaging him.

“We were still unfortunate. At last, however, we obtained a truce. Stripped of his honours, the formidable Kokopilefobe retreated into the most remote regions of the south. The throne which you occupy remained subject to his power; but, by an article of the treaty that I was forced to subscribe, and of which I deposit a copy at the feet of your highness, it was agreed, that all children of a genius should embrace the worship of the prophet, and live under his dominion.”

“It is your part, therefore, great queen! to determine whether your descendents, called to independence and glory, must be reduced to a state of disgraceful slavery, despising the miseries of the martyr of our faith, even the mighty Kokopilefobe.”

Genius! answered the queen, I was ignorant of the terms of the treaty you speak of; but you have concealed from me the infringements that have been made upon it more than once. With respect to the inconvenience that may result from what I have been thinking of, my prudence shall protect my posterity; and tell me, you who are acquainted with the tenor of our charters, if there be any case more sacred than that which you have taken notice of?

“Sage sovereign!” replied the genius, dispense with my producing it to you. It would be

be an obstacle in your way. Ignorance of the law may serve for an excuse to the person who violates it.”—“ I must interrupt you,” said Setelpedour; “ ignorance is a disgrace to one of the genii.—I wish the laws to be known, for it is my duty to execute them; and I command you to produce it.”

“ A genius can give his hand to none but a virgin,” said Bahlisboull; “ and a married person cannot become your husband, unless you forfeit all your privileges and your power.”

Upon this declaration, the queen cursed within herself both the law and its interpreter, and easily penetrated into the malicious stratagem of Bahlisboull, and of the vizir Asmonchar. Artifice succeeding her fury, she began thus:

“ You have, sage genius! pronounced a sentence which would blast all my hopes forever, did I not know how far your profound wisdom and experience, which are coeval with the world itself, exalts you above all spirits; and, as you have so often escaped the chains with which you have been threatened, there is none of our laws which you cannot elude. I hope, therefore, that your zeal and attachment towards me will induce you to employ your sagacity in this matter. Cannot we, who are legislators, set aside



this law ? Or can we find no method of transgressing it, without appearing to violate it ? Be assured that the motive which hath made me assemble this divan would make me do any thing to gratify my desires !”

Bahlisboull triumphed in his own mind at the queen's distress, and her passion for Simouitapha. He supposed her to be as much blinded by love, as he himself was by wickedness and ambition ; and he hoped, that, by his perfidious measures, he would make her lose both the empire of Ginnistan, and the affection of her people.

“ Queen !” replied this dangerous hypocrite, “ the confidence which you have honoured me with ought to ensure your glory and success. No engagements can bind those who, like you, have the right of making them. These laws which you complain of were composed by Kokopilefobe, during his reign here, and in consequence of circumstances which rendered them necessary. But, if he were now sovereign of Ginnistan, he would conduct himself in a very different manner ; and, notwithstanding your power has been derived from him, the order which ought to reign here depends only on your wisdom and pleasure. You have not yet attained the summit of that eminence for which you were destined.”

“ You

“ You are the Star of the Seven Seas which surround the earth, and you would have already, had it not been for the ambition of your predecessor, been the Beneficent Morning Star. The Destinies had, no doubt, marked out the defeat of the great Kokopilefobe ; but his undertaking was hostile to the empire of the genii. With respect to his personal courage, you ought to curse the fatal excess to which he was carried, when he acknowledged the wisdom of the laws of Mahomet. But you, who are sovereign mistress of your desires, should pass a law that might confirm you in the enjoyment of them.”

The proposal of Bahlisboull astonished the spirits who did not comprehend its motive. And Setelpedour pretended to put the greatest confidence in the counsels of the old genius.

You prove more and more, said she to him, how much a mind, instructed by adversity, is superior to that which knows nought but prosperity !—Yes, you have convinced me.—I have no scruple in cursing whatever occasioned the misfortune of my predecessor ; and I am too much attached to the human race, not to acknowledge Mahomet to be superior to any common being ; but I demand of you a copy of the oath I must take.

"You must repeat, with a firm and distinct voice," answered the genius, impatient to accomplish his purpose, "Curfed be thou, Koko-pilefobe! thyself! thy ambition! and thy schemes!"—"You must, forthwith, renounce your religion, in order to embrace that of Mahomet, by repeating this profession of faith:

"Achad, en, la, illa, cala, bella, Mohamad, Rafoud, Alla."

When the queen appears ready to pronounce it, Bahlisboull casts an expreffive look upon the vizir Afmonchar. This signal is immediately interpreted by the divan, who with impatience wait the event. Setelpedour at length takes the oath. "You have informed me of matters," faid ſhe to the old genius, "and ſpoken words which I never heard before.—You muſt therefore write, with your own hand, a copy of the oath that I am to take."—"My hand trembles too much," faid Bahlisboull.—"You may take time," replied the queen; "and, after I ſhall have ſigned it, I wiſh that you and the vizir would carry it to Mahomet."—"I can neither write nor walk," answered the genius.—"I muſt then repeat, as well as I can, what I recollect of it; adding, at the ſame time, the ſentiments of my heart." She now riſes and ſpeaks thus:

Be

“ Be thou cursed for ever, infamous Bahlis-  
“ boull! who, by thy abominable flatteries, didst  
“ poison the heart of my grandfather, and  
“ didst cause him rebel against every sort of  
“ authority. Curse upon thee! principal of  
“ discord, who continually hast the love of  
“ order upon thy lips, but corruption in thy  
“ heart! Curse upon thyself and all thy race  
“ for ever! thou infernal source of those evils  
“ which desolate the universe! Curse upon  
“ thee and thy grandson Asimonchar! who, in  
“ pretending to shew me the good road, have  
“ digged for me a frightful pit! May ye in-  
“ stantly be stript of your wings! May ye be  
“ thrown headlong to the earth! Go! wallow  
“ among mud and dirt!—This is my sentence.”

Upon hearing this, which they did not expect, the murmuring spirits recognised their queen. Her firmness commands the attention of the most wicked. Their sovereign shines forth in the ancient glory which they had forfeited. Her orders are instantly executed; she dismisses the genii, and the divan breaks up.

Although Setelpedour represents to herself the dangers to which her love had exposed her, yet she still feels its darts. “ If thou hadst been witness, my dear Simoustapha,” said she to herself, “ of all that I have braved for thee—What wouldst thou not sacrifice on my account?

But

But what do I say ! I admire that rigid virtue which prompts thee to a refusal at which my self-love cannot take offence. Thou would'st have loved me had'st thou seen me first ; and if, by complying with the wishes of my dear Benalab, in promoting a scheme in which he knew to interest me, I had not presented in a vision the amiable Ilsetilsone, thou would'st this day have been my slave, and I would have been certain of a fidelity which nothing could move. I neither wish to distress thy happiness, nor that of thy spouse ; but thou must love me ; thou must be the same to me as to her ; we must no longer be tied down to the laws of matrimony ; love and gratitude shall prescribe to us other duties.'

Thus the grand-daughter of the guilty, but brave Kokopilefobe, imposed upon herself. She possessed the elevated genius of her grandfather, but was ignorant that human blood flowed in her veins. She had nothing in perfection but courage and beauty. Her heart, however, was pure : She had become subject to a law which Bahlisboull had vaguely explained to her ; and time was to make her feel the effects of it.

Eager to see Simoustapha again, she had not patience to wait for him in her palace ; for this would have been denying herself a pleasure which she could immediately procure, by transporting

porting herself to Bagdad. She therefore calls the slave of the box.

“This night,” said she, “you must carry Ifetilsone to her husband’s apartment, and you must let me know as soon as she is there. I wish by my presence to increase their happiness.”—Jemal executes the orders of the fairy with his usual precaution; Setelpedour soon learns that the princess is with her lover; she instantly sets out for Bagdad, preceded by Jemal, who went to announce to the happy couple the arrival of the queen of the fairies.

They would have appeared more embarrassed, had not the queen, when she arrived, inspired them with confidence, by reiterated marks of affection. She embraced them both, and seated herself at table between them.

“I run no risk,” said she, “in coming to sup with a mortal, the pupil of my much loved Benalab. I have contributed, my dear princess, to procure you the best of husbands. Permit me at least to partake of your felicity. By making you perceive the value of so rare a benefit, I will continue to protect you both by my counsels and power. Be not alarmed, therefore, Simoustapha, at the excess of my affection for you; it is innocent, and shall never occasion you either distress or remorse, if you but return my  
love:



love: Will you pardon him for it, my dear Ilse-tilsonne?" said she, embracing him.

"If my lover," replied the young and ingenious princess, "did not love you, I should have reason to doubt his affection for myself. I have given him my heart; he has therefore two to offer you for the goodness with which you load us. Your virtues and charms have made too lively an impression upon me to resist them."

"You transcend what I expected," replied the queen, "charming princess! I feel a satisfaction which nothing can augment but the same acknowledgment that I expect from Simouftapha."

"Great queen! I can only express the sentiments with which I am animated, by devoting myself to your pleasure."

Setelpedour, content with these assurances of their affection, testified her gratitude during the whole of the repast. They now gave themselves wholly up to the present pleasures, music, dancing, perfumes, liquors; nothing was spared. But, what is seldom the case, they spoke sensibly when all was over.

"Dear prince," said the queen, "upon the consent of the caliph, which I shall soon obtain, your felicity appears to be complete. However, without the greatest precaution on your part,

part, and the greatest care on mine, it may be blasted in a moment. The enchanted box which Benalab sent you is coveted by Mamouk, the cursed magician who formerly possessed it. It is impossible for you always to carry this treasure; but you got a ring from me which you must never part with, for it will warn you of the dangers to which you will be exposed, and at the same time it will come to your assistance. That of the princess will not shew its properties unless you be threatened with death, or where its aid cannot be dispensed with. Remember always to shut your gate and windows against every thing that may come from Egypt." After this, she leaves the pair at liberty, embraces them, and disappears.

The night passes as the preceding; the days succeed without any thing remarkable. Jemal, attentive to his duty, is ever ready to fulfil the orders with which he is intrusted. The princess is every day transported to her lover; and every morning she is with the caliph. Every third day Simoustapha is carried up to Ginnistan, to do homage to the Star of the Seven Seas: But, while his heart appeared to be elated with such an agreeable enjoyment, that of the Egyptian Mamouk breathed nothing but vengeance against the possessor of the wonderful box, which he is ambitious to recover.

The

The hateful magician saw the star of Benalab grow dim; he followed it; it appeared no more; it was a presage of death. This wretch, who dreaded the power of the Persian philosopher, might now with impunity recover a treasure of which the queen of the genii robbed him. He must first, however, find out into what hands the box has fallen.

He avails himself of the first equinox, the only time favourable to the works of those who act in concert with spirits. With his wand he makes a square, which he afterwards divides by two triangles; he calculates these different spaces, which, by furnishing him with the number nine, afford him as many rooms to study in, and to follow out the chain of events which he seeks. He penetrates with a bright wax-candle into each of these dark rooms. This baneful light showed him all the adventures of the sage Persian and the Indian prince, from the moment they embarked till they arrived in Bagdad. He saw Benalab die, and recognised the magic box in the hands of Simoustapha.

Naraes, Mamouk's son, as great a miscreant as his father, assists. Both examine the mark of the box; it appeared to be armed with steel points, and a circle of fire was formed around it. The necromancers were not in the least afraid; the value of the treasure they were in quest

quest of blinded them. The father digged a ditch in his garden at the bottom of an hillock; from this a fountain immediately springs forth, which he points out to his son, and says,

“ Behold the faithful image of the events which await me: As long as this spring shall be clear, thou shalt be at ease on my account. If thou see it grow muddy, send me aid. If it be tinged with blood, I am dead. Thou must then endeavour to revenge my death; thou must try to recover our precious treasure, by attempting to find out the snares that may have been laid for me, and take care to guard against those which shall be prepared for thyself.”

Mamouk at this instant leaves his son; and, in order to conceal his steps, he transforms himself into a cat. Already he had descended from Upper Egypt towards Arabia: The star which shone on Bagdad directs him thither.

When Aurora had announced the return of the sun upon that part of the globe, he stopped amid delicious gardens, continually fertilised by the Ilfara and the Aggiala, which from different directions wash the town of Bagdad. Here he chose an asylum among the trees, whose thick foliage was best for concealing the sneaking appearance he had assumed. He knew that he could not procure admittance into the house of

Simouftapha, which was guarded by the genius of the box, under any form whatever. Waiting, however, till the sun had darted forth his rays, he meditates by what means he might seduce a person to serve his purpose. At that instant he chanced to see a man whom he proposed to sound.

A poor gardener, named Abaire, cultivated the garden where the magician had stopped. Bent under the weight of his work, fatigue and heat forced from him some sighs. Mammouk thought that a man, who was thus in misery, would grasp at any offer to alleviate his sufferings and poverty. The gardener subsisted upon some bits of bread and of fruit which he picked up. With these he filled a little basket for his wife and children; and, when night came, he returned to town with his scanty stock of provision. "Surely," said Mammouk, "if this poor wretch has any place at all to lodge in, I will prevail upon him to share it with me; and I shall be very awkward if I don't make him the instrument of my schemes." At these words, having reassumed his natural form, he hastened to make up to him.

Good evening, Abaire! said he, accosting him; it is not without trouble that you have procured the fruits you carry to your family. Ha! who are you, my good Sir, said the gardener,

gener, surprised to hear himself named, who speak to a poor man like me?

"I am a man," replied Mamouk, "who know you as well as you do yourself; I could name every tree in your garden, and those too which you take most care of. I love the poor; and, when I am on a journey, I always lodge with them, persuaded that I shall want for nothing; for I cause every thing be brought to me; and I find nothing too good for myself, provided I can promise myself the happiness of sharing it with them."

"Alas!" said Abaire, "it would be too much happiness to flatter myself with receiving such a guest as you; but we have no bed for you."

"Here are ten pieces of gold," replied the magician, "with which you may purchase what is necessary. I can conceive no greater enjoyment than that of doing good to the good when in need. There is a secret in being happy, which I am not afraid of losing. Luxury and opulence harden the heart of the rich; and, whilst the poor man eats his bread with the sweat of his brow, what a number of people in Bagdad whet their appetite with the choice and delicious ragouts of Simoustapha?—Do you know Simoustapha?"

Know him, Sir! Is there one poor man in Bagdad who does not know this generous and



compassionate man? We don't live far from him; I go often, by my master's orders, and sell him the most beautiful fruits of our garden, and he always gives me something to myself."

During this conversation they arrived at the town; and Abaire conducts his guest to his mean dwelling. "Woman," said he, as he went in, "I bring thee this good gentleman, and you need not ask with what we are to entertain him; here my hand is full of gold, and I am going to buy a sofa."

Mamouk entered a room, whose whole furniture consisted of but two wooden chairs and a table; the wife and children were almost naked; misery was painted all around him; and, if he would have any thing proper, he must increase his presents.

"Abaire," said he to him, "I love to do good; here are ten pieces more of gold, to get whatever is wanting. Consult your own decency and my interest for the future."

The poor gardener thought that he was dreaming when he saw so much riches: Having thanked Providence and the great prophet, he goes out to make his bargains.

The good woman began to give an appearance of cleanness to her house. "Let me do it," said Mamouk; "this trouble is on my account, and I wish to assist you. In the mean time,

time, go and buy clothes for yourself, your husband, and children; there are twenty sequins for that purpose; they will not offend the eye by their lustre; and you must take care to tell nobody that you got them from your guest. If it be discovered, I must immediately depart from your house: What good I can do loses all its value in my eyes whenever I find that it is known. When your husband shall return, we will think about provisions."

The wife of Abaire went out, and promised to herself, for the first time, to keep a secret in which she was so deeply interested. As poverty had too often put her to the blush, she finds it difficult to conceal this blessing.

Both soon return; the gardener is not a little surprised to find his house in a better condition, and his family so well clothed. The author of this happy change sits down to table with them, and appears to enjoy, with every possible degree of satisfaction, the fruits of his beneficence. But, in fact, he enjoyed only the success of the stratagem, by which he blinded these unsuspecting creatures, whilst they viewed him in the light of a beneficent being.

The hour of repose was come. Abaire and his wife went to taste its sweets; whilst the Egyptian was devising the means of snatching off the treasure which the Indian prince possessed.

He knew, for he had seen it in the ninth room, drawn according to the rules of his art, that the prince enjoyed the favours of love every night in the arms of his beautiful spouse. What a favourable time for surprising him! did not the genius of the box watch over the happy pair; did not the vigilance of the queen of the genii guard them alike from natural and miraculous attacks.

The magician, impatient to begin his work, could rest no longer in the house, but transformed himself into a cat, and ran round the house of Simoustapha. The avenues are guarded against him; and, under whatever form he presents himself, inevitable death awaits him. Seized with terror, he returned to seek for quiet at the house of Abaire.

The sole care of Mamouk is to win the confidence of the gardener to such a degree, that he may render him completely the instrument of his insidious designs. He therefore reassumed his human figure.

Next morning he accompanied Abaire to the garden, and conversed with him about his art; he instructed him in what he did not know; he partook of his frugal fare, and quenched his thirst from the same spring. "You have a great many beautiful fruits," said he; "but, if this garden were your own, I would make such  
grow

grow in it as were never seen even at the caliph's table."

"Alas!" said the gardener, "I have only two trees, an apple and a pear-tree, which came from the Indies. I planted them on a small spot near my own house; but the soil did not appear to agree with them, for their fruit never ripened."

"Be cautious and prudent," replied Mamouk, "don't speak a word, and I shall make your fortune; we shall work together. Provided your wife and children remain ignorant of the matter, your two trees shall produce as good fruit as if they had remained in their native soil, and had enjoyed the most favourable climate. But, as the least whisper may ruin every thing, we must observe the strictest silence with respect to what we are going to do together. In a few days you shall gather from your pear-tree fruit whose beauty shall astonish you."

Abaire and Mamouk returned to the house, where a good repast waited them. Thanks to the generous precautions of the magician, who likewise added to it whatever could tend to gain the hearts of his hosts!

Next morning the Egyptian anticipated the dawn, and went to seek for the two trees which the gardener had mentioned.

He

He had only to open a door, which ushered him in to a spot of ground about twenty feet square. There the two plants languished, being deprived of the heat of the sun: The pear-tree, however, bore one blossom. When Abaire rose, he perceived the door open, saw the magician, and approached him. "You see how the moss hath consumed my poor trees." "I rose," said Mamouk, "in order to take it off them; but you see that the second bark is green and in excellent condition; shut the door; let us finish our work here whilst every body is asleep; I will show you a fine thing in a little. As this, however, is to make your fortune, you must first assure me of your obedience; bind yourself to me by a solemn oath; swear by the Koran, and upon my sabre, that you will be faithful in every trial, by repeating these words: "Every thing that Mamouk will do shall be for the good of Abaire, and Abaire will obey every command of Mamouk."

The good gardener did not hesitate to enter into an engagement which appeared to be all in his own favour. Mamouk makes him bring a peg, three knots of cord, and two spades.

The tools are brought: "Take this cord," said Mamouk to him, "tie one end of it to the tree, and the other to the peg; draw a circle

circle, at the distance of three feet from the tree, as exactly as you can, then loose the cord from the tree, and we will begin to dig within the circle, until we shall have restored and given nourishment to the roots. If we would succeed, we must work with method; and I tell you that this is an operation of geometry."

In a moment, the small space which surrounds the tree is cultivated. "Was there a blossom on your tree?" said Mamouk.—"Yes, you are perfectly right," answered the credulous gardener.—"Nothing more lucky for us!" replied the magician; "approach it, speak to it, flatter it! Every object in nature enjoys life and sense, although this does not always appear: Say to it, "My good little blossom, thou must produce me a pear larger than any that grow in the Indies; I wish it to be such that a man might conceal himself in it."

Abaire smiled innocently when he pronounced these words. To effect this, said he to Mamouk, it ought to be like the dome of a minaret.—We need not trouble ourselves about the likeness, said the magician, we need only a pear to answer our purpose.

When the operation was finished, our workmen shut the door, of which Mamouk kept the key, and they both set out for the garden, where Abaire was to be employed during the day;



day; the Egyptian takes part of the work, and accommodates himself to him in every respect.—Had a third person heard them, he would have thought them simpletons.

The pear-tree appeared to be entirely forgot: Honest Abaire believed it to be only a childish whim, and that by his complaisance he had gratified the humour of one whose presence and kindness relieved his family.

Eight days pass without Mamouk showing the least curiosity to see the effect of what he had done. At length, on the ninth day, when Abaire was about to go to his business, as usual, the Egyptian seeming quite ready to go along with him, said to him, "Have you no desire to see what is become of our fruit?"

"I have, if you think proper," said Abaire; "but I am afraid that we shall have lost our time in digging at the root of a tree which has been three times cursed. I treated it in quite a different manner formerly; but it never throve a whit the better for it. It is true, I did not know to flatter it; however, let us go in and see."

One may naturally conjecture, that the good gardener, accustomed to his ordinary work, and to regular productions, had no thought of finding such a phenomenon upon a branch where he had left nothing but a parched and languishing

guishing blossom. What then must have been his astonishment, when he saw, hanging in the same place, a pear of such a prodigious size, that it was four times larger than any one of the same kind that had been ever seen. I could never have believed it, said he in his surprise; to whom shall I sell this pear? If I carry it to the palace, the officers of the caliph will give any thing for it, and will be proud to get it: If I show it to Simoustapha, he will spare no price. "You are in the right," said Mamouk; "he will pay you better than any body else; and besides, he will consider himself as much indebted to you. Take courage, my dear Abaire, your tree shall forthwith flourish like the rose-bush in May, and none but Simoustapha can pay you for these fruits. Go, put your pear upon a plate, and cover it with a linen cloth; you must seize the moment when Simoustapha shall be before his shop, and you must pass before him as usual. He will be curious to see your fruits; draw his attention to this pear till he desire and covet it, and you are certain of an exorbitant price; but I told you that I wished to enter into the pear; I wish to do it still."

"Ah! certainly I don't oppose it," said Abaire smiling; "make yourself so little that you can find room in it; you will have the appearance of a very fine kernel."—"Do you wish  
me

me then to become a kernel in it?"—"Yes, if it is possible."—"Order me to be it."—"Well! I order you to be it."—"Pull out the stalk then, in order to open the door to me."

Abaire being in good humour, wished to carry on the joke, and made a small movement, as in order to pull away the stalk of the fruit; it stuck to his hand, and gave him great pain.

"This is a small misfortune," said Mamouk; "for without this, I should have stopped at the door. Put the stalk into its place again; go, seek your plate, endeavour to make up to your man;—the fruit will appear no less curious to him;—it has lost nothing of either its size or taste.—Next week we will get better ones to eat."

The gardener having gone to seek the plate, returned, but did not find Mamouk. He imagined that he had gone to see the pear-tree, and having no need of him to help him in selling his fruit, he sets out without the least uneasiness for the house of Simoustaphá.

Mamouk abused the simplicity of Abaire completely. This impostor, stript of the half of his power, reduced to a passive condition by a superior power, has been forced to transform the ignorant gardener into a magician, without his suspecting it. He associated him with himself, and made him artfully command whatever it was his

own

own interest to execute. Such are the dangers of ignorance!

Scarce had Abaire turned his back, in order to go and seek the plate, when the Egyptian, faithful to the command which he made be given to himself, diminishes the size of his body, and enters into the pear, that he may there assume the form of a kernel. Were they to cut the pear without cutting the stone, and especially, if they were to be charmed with the delicious taste of the fruit, the wretch Mamouk would recover his loss, and complete his vengeance.

Hitherto every thing tended to favour the views of the cabalist: Simoustapha is at the gate when Abaire passes, and makes him show his fruit. The gardener said that he was going to present it to the caliph himself, and that he would get two hundred sequins for it. Give it to me, said Simoustapha, you shall not have to go far, here are two hundred sequins, and fifty more for the honour you do me in giving me the preference.

Abaire, elated with his good fortune, left both the plate and cloth, to embrace him to whom he was indebted for so much money: He returns home with eagerness, but does not find Mamouk.—He supposes him to be in the garden without the city; he runs to it, but does not find him there; he seeks him every where,

and demands him from the neighbouring rivers and echoes in vain.

During this fruitless search Simoustapha impatiently waited the hour when he should enjoy the charms of the charming Ilsetilsone, and offer her the most beautiful fruit she had ever seen upon the earth.

Night was come; the genius had done its duty; the happy pair are dressed in the presents of their charming protectress; the clothes, the rings, the necklace, the diamond chain, interwoven with the hair.—In short, nothing is forgot.

The mute eunuch presents the beautiful fruit which the Indian prized so much; Ilsetilsone admires it, and finds that it has a most exquisite flavour. They hear a little noise as they cut the pear; a kernel escapes from it, and leaps upon the ground.

The fatal bit had already touched the lips of the two lovers; Simoustapha cries aloud; the ring having pricked him, occasions a violent pain.—Ilsetilsone lets fall the bit, which she held; the prince makes an effort to pull off her finger the jewel which hurts her; and this calls the genius, the slave of the ring.

It was of an ugly frightful shape; the princess fainted when she saw it.—What art thou?

What

What do'st thou want with me? said Simousta-pha to it. I am the slave of the ring which my mistress gave thee, answered the phantom; I warn thee that thou art in the greatest danger; thy enemy is in the house; that fruit is poisoned; I fly to the aid of the box; when it shall be out of danger I will return.

Simousta-pha and his slaves assisted the princess. Jemal, during this time, shut up in the magic box, defended himself, as well as he could, against the attacks of his former master, whose power he dreaded. Mamouk applied an enchanted ring to the lock of the chest in which the box was shut up; the lock opened, and, at the same instant, the genius who guarded it substituted another in its place. This conflict was renewed six times; and Jemal was at last about to yield, when the genius of the box arrived.

Infamous wretch! said he to Mamouk, thou shalt die by no hand but mine. At the same time, he exhales up all the air in the room, and lifts his arm to strike the Egyptian, who falls to the ground like one suffocated. He is immediately cast into chains; robbed of his magic ring, his wand, his book of enchantments, and thrown upon the floor, stript of his power, and half dead.



After this victory, the genius of the ring came to inform Simoustapha of the dangers to which he had been exposed by the stratagem of Mamouk. "Come," said he, "view your enemy, and dispose of him, not according to the goodness of your heart, but according to the badness of his."

Simoustapha followed the genius into the room, but Mamouk was gone.—Curfed magician! inexhaustible in resources! said the genius, what force hath enabled thee to escape? But thou wast bound and could'st not get off, He advises Simoustapha, therefore, to take the box, to call Jemal, and to cause them seek in concert the wretch who wished to escape.

The two genii found him in the garden, where he was begun to rid himself of his irons. But, upon seeing his adversaries, he plunges into the canal: Immediately two banks are formed, which shut him up. Upon this he jerks into the air, like a drop of water; but he is constrained to fall back into a basin which they had made for him: He is now forced to evaporate into flame; but a thick vapour, which rises on every side, thwarts this scheme.

From this mixture of elements, the canal appears filled with quick burning lime, which they were afraid to approach: The genius of the ring throws into it two pieces of the pear; in an instant

instant they dissolve; then the genius, addressing Simouftapha, says to him,

Prince! pronounce sentence upon this wretch; we are ready to execute it : say to him,

“ Infamous magician ! I shut you up in your works, and with your works, that you may be punished by your works.”

Simouftapha pronounced the sentence.—The magician on a sudden became a shapeless mass of marble, of the figure of a cat, resembling those frightful statues which were seen among the idolatrous before the coming of the prophet.

The genius carried out of the garden this horrid image.

Simouftapha returned to his spouse, who, although recovered from her first fright, yet was not without alarm on his account. Upon seeing him, she recovered her spirits. They enter together into the closet where the box was placed ; Simouftapha touches it, and Jemal appears.

Sir, says the genius, what do you want with your slave ? I want you to relate to me all the particulars of the event which has just now happened.

It places itself astride upon the box, and obeys the orders of Simouftapha : It describes the machinations, the journey, and the arrival of Mamouk the magician at Bagdad ; it also

relates how he deceived the gardener; how he lodged at his house; his transformations; the enchantment of the pear-tree; the manner in which he introduced himself to Simoustapha, who carried to itself the fruit in the kernel of which the traitor had concealed himself; how he came out of it when the pear was cut. It describes its own conflict in the box, where it incessantly opposed a fresh touch to that which the magic ring of the Egyptian destroyed.

From this box, in which it was intrenched, in order to defend it, it had seen the genius of the ring come to its assistance. It relates how the conjurer had been thrown down, bound, stript of his magic; and how that the very instant the genius of the ring went out of the closet, spirits, sent from the lower Egypt to aid Mamouk, by his son Naraes, had come to carry him suddenly off, and had put him in a condition to make the last conflict, in which he had at length yielded.

These explanations having consumed part of the night, the two consorts had scarce time to congratulate themselves on their good luck in having escaped so many stratagems, such dangerous attacks, and such well concerted schemes. Ifsetifone is obliged to trust herself to the care of the faithful Jemal, and to return to the caliph's palace in her usual carriage.

Simoustapha

Simoustapha endeavoured to find in the bath that quiet which such perturbation had caused him lose. He afterwards made ready to set out for Ginnistan. He had recourse to the box, invoked the genius of it, set out, and arrived in the presence of the queen of the genii, to whom his dangers had rendered him dearer.

She comes into his presence, and testifies to him, by the tenderest caresses, the warm part she had taken on account of his misfortune. She spares the young prince the relation of an adventure, of which she knew the minutest particular; but she avails herself of this circumstance, in order to induce him to watch with care the ring and the box. She puts him on his guard against the attacks of the son of Mamouk, as dangerous as his father. "In vain," said she to him, "shall I have my eyes always upon you, and surround you by the powers which are subject to me, if you don't endeavour to secure yourself against the snares of men. My assistance displays itself only by supernatural means; take care of yourself; put yourself in a condition that you may turn your virtues and wisdom to your advantage, after the example of your master Benalab."

Let us here finish the salutary counsels of the queen, and the warm gratitude of Simoustapha.

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He took leave of the queen; the genius conducted him back to Bagdad, where political movements pave the way for more interesting events.

The caliph, having learned that the city of Damulcus was besieged by two hundred thousand infidels, caused an order be issued to all Mussulmans to take arms, and follow him, to give relief to this important place.

Upon this Simouftapha feels a sentiment natural to great souls: He is inflamed with zeal and courage for the *true* faith. The love of glory, and the desire appearing worthy of his mistress, makes him pant after the laurels, and trace the footsteps of the commander of the faithful. He therefore calls Jemal.

"You have just now heard," said he to the genius, "the proclamation of the caliph. I wish to second his views: Make them bring me a horse immediately, and armour suitable to my rank and birth."

The genius cleaves the air, and informs Setpeldour of the intention of the young prince; the queen applauds his purpose, and wishes to put the hero in a condition of attaining the greatness for which he is destined. She also orders for him one of the most beautiful horses that can be found in any of the three Arabias.

The

The emissaries make their choice at Sardie, an uninhabited district, three days journey from Damascus, where the best horses are to be met with: They find one to which no other could be compared. He was of the breed of Gelpha, which had mounted the great prophet, when, after having erected his victorious standard on the towers of Medina, he over-ran Palestine and the two Syrias, and soon made all Asia bend under the strokes of his glorious scymitar, and the wise laws of the divine Koran.

The nativity of the horse destined for Simou-stapha, cast, at the very moment of his birth, by the wisest astrologers, presaged that he was to serve under the greatest prince in the world, and establish the happiness and duration of two powerful empires.

The dispositions of this animal completely justified the decrees of his destiny: Tractable, active, spirited, capable of any fatigue, he was never the slave of his appetites; he endured thirst and hunger without the least alteration on his vigorous constitution; he could live without sleep, and feed on air. He added to these excellent qualities those of the readiest obedience, the most acute understanding, and a firm attachment to his master: How many men were inferior to him?

Setel-



Setelpedour wished to see the horse destined for her favourite; the steed neighed for joy that he was going to make his appearance before the queen of the genii, and contribute to the glory of the hero whom she protected: He was introduced to Ginnistan; he excited the admiration of Setelpedour: A harness worthy of his beauty, but without any extraordinary show, is immediately provided for him; he is loaded with the complete armour of the prince. The cuirass, and the other necessary pieces, are made of steel-plates of Damascus; the scymitar is of a temper which nothing can resist: All his arms are of a sable hue. Simoustapha was waiting with impatience upon the terrace of his house for the return of Jemal, when he brought into the court the haughty steed.

At the sight of so beautiful a present, the young prince feels himself penetrated with gratitude, and filled with new ardour; he burns to signalise his courage; but love still throws some obstacles in his way.

When the genius, favoured by the shades of night, had carried Ilsetilsone from the palace of the caliph, and united the two consorts; when the beautiful princess was informed of the designs of her lover, she lost the use of her senses; she recovered only to abandon herself to more cruel despair, and the night was spent in tears.

Although

Although the caliph had departed, Simoustapha, sacrificing his glory to the tender concerns of love, left his steed to champ the bit with impatience; he makes the air re-echo with his neighing; Jemal can hardly restrain him; he wishes for the saddle and bridle; and his foot seems to strike the hours which ought to have warned Simoustapha of his departure.

More than a day elapsed before Simoustapha could tear himself from the arms of Ilsetilfone, whose alarms he dreaded. Setelpedour saw his distress, blushed for his weakness; but, anxious for his glory, runs up to him.

“ You fail in your duty,” said she to him; “ you forfeit your glory and the safety of the state in which you live; you languish under a shameful weakness; depart instantly; if you hesitate a moment, I give you entirely up. My slave is ready to conduct you to Damascus; I shall take care of your spouse; receive my blessing.”

Upon hearing this, Simoustapha recognises his weakness, and blushes on account of it; he falls at the knees of the fairy, and implores her pardon and protection.

He mounts his steed, which, quick as lightening, transports him to Damascus; and he is conducted by the genii the slaves of the fairy. Having reached an eminence, he gets a view of  
the

the city. The infidels were assaulting it; the army of the caliph had come to close quarters with the enemy, and were labouring under a manifest disadvantage: The two wings were broken, and had given way.

The standard of Mahomet pointed out the place where Haroun Alraschid fought. He was in the middle of his army; the infidels pressed his battalions; and, having almost reached himself, this illustrious sovereign was ready to fall a victim to their fury.

Swifter than lightening, Simoustapha is in the midst of the carnage; every stroke of his scymiter carries death along with it; every step of his horse tramples the infidels. In a moment he delivers his sovereign from the dangers that threatened him: His thundering voice strikes terror into the enemy, but reanimates the drooping spirits of the Mussulmans. They are all rallied under the standard of the sacred prophet, which Simoustapha had seized; he waves it in the middle of the battalion which he had just formed. At this signal, the souls of the warriors are inspired with fresh confidence; the combat is renewed with more vigour; but death shifts its ground; it seizes upon that of the infidels, and spreads havock around. The ardour of his steed carries him through all the ranks in an instant. He takes the command  
into

into his own hand; every one obeyed: The commanders and the soldiers took him to be an angel from heaven sent to their relief; he made part pursue the runaways, whilst he, with the rest of the army, advanced under the walls of Damascus.

The ladders which had been prepared for the assault are destroyed, the assailants are tumbled headlong from the walls, and the gates of the city are thrown open to its deliverer.

Simoustapha marches in triumph at the head of the conquerors; the crowd, as he passes, fall down to embrace his knees; and the preserver of Damascus receives the homage of a people in whose behalf he had displayed so much valour. They advance towards the principal mosque, to thank Heaven and Mahomet for such a signal deliverance. Haroun does not lose sight of the object of his gratitude: Simoustapha, having pulled down his visier, kept himself however near the caliph. When they arrived at the gate of the mosque, he alights, and approaches in a most suppliant manner to do homage to his sovereign, by assisting him to dismount.

Haroun politely accepts the assistance of the young warrior; but he is distressed to see a wound on the hand which is presented to him, and which is covered with blood.

Vallant hero, said he to him, you are wounded?—Great commander of the faithful, answered the Indian prince, the wound is by no means dangerous, for I feel no inconvenience from it.—Noble warrior, the heat of the action, and your intrepid courage, have made you forget it; but we shall not enter the mosque without dressing your wound. Your goodness affects me much, exclaimed Simoustapha; the duties in which you are going to be engaged ought to precede those which concern only the meanest, but most devoted of your subjects.

The caliph was charmed with this token of submission: Brave Muffulman, said he, taking a handkerchief, upon which his name was written in letters of gold, from his girdle, condescend at least to keep your hand from the air, by wrapping it up in this handkerchief, till we may have it in our power to give you other relief.

Simoustapha obeyed. They entered the mosque, which immediately re-echoed with the songs and thanksgivings of all the people.

After this the caliph goes to the palace that had been designed for him during his stay at Damascus: Several officers, who had had the courage to keep aloof during the combat, became now jealous of their places, that they might accompany him in his triumph. Simoustapha,

mouftapha, regardless of fuch frivolous preferments, leaves them without being noticed, mounts his horfe, and difappears on a fudden.

He had facrificed to glory whatever was proper; it is time now to alleviate the diftrefs of his miftrefs: His intelligent fteed appeared to partake of his impatience; he fcarcely touches the road as he fcours over it; and Simouftapha foon revifits the much longed for watch-towers of Bagdad.

During his abfence, the beneficent queen of the genii would not fuffer Ifetifone to abandon herfelf to diftrefs. The firft night, therefore, that the prince departed, fhe ordered the genius to convey to her the caliph's daughter. What muft have been her aftonifhment when fhe awoke, to find herfelf in the arms of the queen, inftead of thofe of Simouftapha?

Don't be difconcerted, faid Setelpedour to her, embracing her tenderly, your husband muft attend to his duty under the colours of the caliph. Your happinefs depends, more than you imagine, upon the fervice which he has it in his power to do him; it is not a fruitlefs glory which he afpires at. I fhall watch over his fafety as well as I can; and I would fight by his fide were I allowed; but I am



subject to a different law. It is distressing for me that the merit of Simoustapha hath inspired me with love; and that my partiality towards him hath made the malevolent spirits of my empire rebel. I have already punished them; and I am determined to put them all to defiance, as we have still more dangers to encounter.

Be of good cheer, amiable princess, assist me in procuring happiness to him whom we love more than life itself, by not multiplying the causes of his disquiet! Reproach him not for a separation, which his glory and your common interest rendered necessary. You shall see him again in a short time; trust yourself to the wisdom and the care of the queen of the genii.

Isfetilsone was comforted, and immediately carried back to the palace of her father.

Whilst the commander of the faithful is repairing in procession to the palace destined for him at Damascus, he looks around to discover the hero to whom he owes his safety, that of his army, the relief of Damascus, and complete victory: He does not perceive him: He orders him to be sought for every where: Inquiries are fruitless. He makes his heralds at arms proclaim it both within and without the city, but without success. The warrior had disappeared with his steed; he had not raised the  
vicer

visier of his helmet, therefore every thing remains unknown with regard to him.

The people persist in believing that heaven had sent an angel to their relief; but the blood which Haroun had seen flowing was that of a human being; the handkerchief which he had given him was stained with it.

The commander of the faithful, in distress, because it was not in his power to testify his gratitude to his benefactor, and informed that the Infidels who had escaped the slaughter were embarked, provides for the future security of Damascus, and returns to Bagdad at the head of twelve thousand knights, after having disbanded his army.

Already had Simoustapha enjoyed the pleasure of revisiting his affectionate spouse, and of thanking their amiable protectress. Spending the days with the one, and the nights with the other, he was as happy as a mortal could be.

He informed his dear Ilsetilsone of every particular of his military achievements; and they were still more interesting to this amiable princess, in proportion as they had contributed to the glory of the caliph. She took the handkerchief in which the hand of her lover was wrapped, and bedewed every now and then with her tears the characters which exhibited to her the name of her father, and the stains

of the blood that had been shed in his defence.

“ I will keep this handkerchief,” said she; “ it will always call to my remembrance that moment when the object of my tenderness was saved by that of my love.”

In the mean while the caliph arrives, amid the acclamations of the inhabitants of Bagdad; triumphal arches are raised to his renown; he finds an adequate compensation for his labours, in the affection of his subjects, and the tenderness of his family. Zobeida and her daughter demonstrate their transports of joy by the most lively caresses; but the caliph, wearied with so many honours, thinks of nothing but the stranger warrior, who had denied him the pleasure of rewarding him. “ He received from me nothing but a handkerchief to cover his wound,” said the monarch; “ it is the only favour he would accept; but I have promised ten thousand sequins to that person who shall inform me of his name, his condition, and where he lives: I shall reward him who saved the standard of the holy prophet from the hands of the Infidels, who delivered my people, and to whom I owe my life and my crown. It is in vain that he denies himself the honours that are due to him; I will celebrate a festival in his honour, which shall bring all Damascus to Bagdad to witness his extraordinary valour.

lour. I cannot represent the features of his face accurately, as he never lifted the visier of his helmet; but I will represent his armour, of which I have a distinct idea, and his steed full of fire. Sure there will not be a Mussulman in my empire who will not be eager to witness the celebration of the festival, in honour of the hero of the fable arms; and he shall not be long unknown to those who shall be present at the warlike solemnity."

Isfetilsone was delighted with the encomiums lavished upon her lover, and the enthusiasm of the caliph. How often had she almost been tempted to say, "I know him, the hero of the fable arms, the conqueror of the Infidels, and also my conqueror."

The orders of Haroun are executed: The festivals held for the relief of Damascus continued thirty days; the two last of these are set apart for a military representation of the exploits of the knight of the fable arms. These festivals accomplished the views of the caliph by means quite unconnected with those which this monarch had thought of.

The last day of the festival, when Zobeida was upon the balcony with her daughter, *a coup de soleil* struck the young princess; she uttered a loud shriek, and fell upon the bosom of her mother. While she was affording relief to her daughter,

daughter,

daughter, she perceived symptoms which could not be mistaken; her bosom discovered the effects of a conjugal union: Alarmed with this surprising discovery, she runs instantly to the caliph, to inform him of so important a secret: It was not by conjectures that she formed her conclusion; complete certainty convinced her of it: They go together into the apartment of Ifetifone, to draw from her a confession which concerned their glory and their repose.

“ For several months,” says the princess, “ I have been carried off every night without perceiving it; I am transported through the air, and conveyed into a chamber magnificently furnished, and find myself in the arms of a man who is unknown to me; but who, I confess, has inspired me with the most tender passion.”

From this recital of his daughter, the caliph easily judged that some miraculous enchantment had seduced her, and thought it unreasonable to reproach her for a fault, which, from its nature, seemed to be excusable.

Madam, says he to Zobeida, it appears that a genius is enamoured of our daughter; our opposition would only irritate it; we must recommend her, as well as ourselves, to the protection of the holy prophet. Saying this, he embraces his daughter, as usual, and leaves her to that repose which she stood so much in need of.

Zobeida

Zobeida imitates the wise conduct of her husband.

Isfetilsone flatters herself that she will be able to inform her lover the following night, that he may take care to bring the handkerchief, and make known in the palace the knight of the fable arms : He must arrive there with his spirited steed, and all his accoutrements of war.

The caliph assembles his privy council, the members of which were Giafar and Mesrour. Giafar receives the information with astonishment : Mesrour is less surprised ; he had, for a long time, perceived that it was impossible to awake the guard which was stationed at the apartment of the princess.

What method shall we fall upon, says the caliph, to find out and surprise the inchanter of my daughter ? every night she is lifted up in the air. I have a little device in my head, says Mesrour, which we may make use of immediately. I have a phosphoric substance which I received from an astrologer ; it is composed of an oil extracted from an animal called a Basilisk : Whenever it is in the open air and in motion it flames without burning. I am going to pour some drops of it upon the coverlet of the princess ; it will dry instantly, and retain no smell. As soon as they are in the open air, they will emit sparkling stars, which will



will serve to conduct the persons who are to follow her into the house of the seducer.

The caliph approves the scheme: Mesrour goes to put it in execution; and Giafar warns the judge of the police, who was to follow the meteor wherever it went, and get the house instantly surrounded. Five hundred men are immediately appointed to run after the new constellation which was to appear that night; but the secret remains between the caliph and his counsellors.

Night came; the genius not having cast its eyes upon the earth, was ignorant of what was doing there, and obeyed, as usual, the orders of Simoustapha, and went to carry off the princefs.

Scarce had it got above the palace, when the phosphoric substance shone with all its lustre; the guards from every quarter pursue it; the genius had good eyes, but it did not see every thing. It carried its charming load into the apartment of the Indian prince, illuminated with a hundred wax candles. The light of the phosphoric substance disappeared entirely; and the guards, rushing in an instant from every part of the town, surround the house of Simoustapha.

The young prince heard the noise, rubbed his ring, examined the box; the two genii appeared. They were ordered to observe what passed;  
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fed ; and, above all, to defend the house against the danger with which it was threatened. In a moment they converted both the doors and windows into a solid wall.

The judge of the police caused awake the neighbours, to ask them where the door of Simouftapha's house was. The good people rubbed their eyes, but could not find it ; they lighted several flambeaux, but all to no purpose. The judge became quite impatient. Giafar and Mefrour arrived ; and, ever since the latter had discovered the secret of the Basilisk oil, he imagined his invention to be adequate to any thing. As he finds no door, therefore, he causes mount the terrace with ladders ; the house is surrounded in an instant ; and there is nothing wanted but battering-rams, hooks, and testudoes, to make a complete siege. Forty ladders are made, each several feet higher than the house ; every one strives to get the start of another, allured by the hope of plunder ; but, the more haste the besiegers make, the worse they succeed ; the ladders sink into the earth, in proportion as they mount the steps, till they disappear altogether.

“ Cease then to kick about,” exclaimed the judge of the police ; “ are you afraid ? Mount then.”—Let us exert our whole strength upon it, said some of them ; and indeed they were  
over-

overwhelmed with fatigue, without being able to get an inch from the ground. The judge, his patience being worn out, alights from his horse, and urges the assailants with great keenness: "Mount, therefore, quicker." — "By Mahomet mount it yourself," said they to the judge, "for the ladders are bewitched!"

The judge having lost his patience, mounts the ladder in his robe. He wishes to take two steps at once, that he may mount quicker; but, as the ladder sinks in proportion as he attempts to mount, he loses his balance, and is entangled with his robe.

A general laugh followed this unexpected fall. Notwithstanding this, the night was spent in redoubling the useless efforts of this ridiculous assault; in which, although they came never a whit nearer their purpose, they flattered themselves that every moment their labours would be crowned with success. Every thing was in an uproar in the streets of Bagdad; and, as the people were not let into the secret of the matter, they imagined that the festival of the knight with the false arms still continued, and that the siege of Damascus was represented by the burlesque escalade which was going on at the house of Simoustapha.

Haroun expected the victim every moment, and had resolved to sacrifice him, without giving him

him time to speak. One may easily imagine what was his impatience; the rumour and the noise brought to his ears reports always more ridiculous and exaggerated; his uneasiness equalled the desire of vengeance which he had formed.

On the contrary, the inner part of Simoustapha's house was so quiet that you could have heard the motion of a fly. As soon as the genii perceived the stratagem of Mesrour to discover the route of the princess, they took the necessary precautions to shelter the house against the first surprise, and immediately conveyed Ilsetilsone into the palace of the caliph in the midst of a fog, which intercepted the effect of the phosphorus. The cloud of vapour rested upon the palace; the assailants become stupid; and the caliph himself is deprived of his usual activity.

The Indian prince consults the genius of the box, and of the ring, upon the means of protection for next day; and quietly gives himself up to sweet repose, under the immediate protection of the Star of the Seven Seas.

The day at last appears: Simoustapha repairs to the terrace of his house to enjoy the morning sun; he descries Giafar and Mesrour in the crowd; he calls them, and addresses the latter.

“ Sublime minister !” says he, “ why do you surround the house of a Mussulman, devoted to the will of the commander of the faithful ? I charge you to tell him, that if he wishes to have possession of my person, he must raise this siege ; I will then deliver myself into his hands.”

Mesrour repairs to the palace, and advises the caliph to accept a condition which would put the incanter in his power. Orders are issued to the judge of the police, who retires immediately with all his people ; and the scaling ladders, thrown down, are left at the bottom of the wall.

When all the passages are free, Simoustapha goes out by one of the doors, which broke open immediately, and proceeds, without betraying the least symptom of fear, towards the palace of the caliph.

Haroun is surpris'd at the audacity of the magician ; he does not wish to see him, but orders him to be beheaded in the middle of the first court of the palace, in presence of all the people who should be assembled there. The inner guard seizes the Indian prince, who presents his hands to the irons with which he was to be loaded ; the executioner lays hold of him, and takes off his turban, in order to bind the

the fatal veil upon his eyes; the handkerchief of the caliph is under the turban.'

Giafar and Mesrour instantly recollect it; the people who had seen the model at the mock festival exclaimed, "See the handkerchief of the knight of the fable arms!" A circumstance still more singular solicits the attention of the grand vizir; Simoultapha had upon his head a fillet set with precious stones, and a magnificent diamond which he had got from the caliph.—Giafar pronounced with a loud voice the words which were engraved upon the fillet, "Given by the caliph Haroun Alraschid to his nephew Simoultapha, son of the great king of the Indies."

A confused noise was heard from every quarter: "It is the son of the king of the Indies," they exclaimed; "it is the prince Simoultapha!"

In the mean time, Mesrour had carried the handkerchief to the caliph: "Who has delivered to you that handkerchief?" says the sovereign eagerly.—"It was on the head of the man whom you have condemned."—"Are my orders executed?"—"No, Sire; I come to receive them."—"Fly, run, Mesrour; preserve the life of the generous warrior who saved mine. Instantly conduct him to me."

M. 2      Giafar



Giafar had anticipated his orders; the surprise and the cries of the people had induced him to bring Simouftapha into the presence of the caliph: The prince arrived at the foot of the throne; and the first object which struck the commander of the faithful was the diamond which had formerly been sent to the great king of the Indies.

“What!” said he to Simouftapha, “are you the son of my brother the king of the Indies?”—“You see it, to be the case, most glorious caliph!”—“And are you the warrior to whom I owe my honour and my life.”—“Behold the wound I received before Damascus, and which was the occasion of your bestowing upon me such tokens of friendship.”—“And are you also the admirer of my daughter Ilsetilsone?”—“You see her slave and your’s.”

“May a thousand thanks be rendered to the great prophet!” exclaimed the caliph, “Is it you then, Simouftapha, whom I have cherished from your infancy, and to whom I have destined the hand of my daughter? You could have had no rival but the knight of the fable arms, and you are that same knight, whose services I never thought that I could have sufficiently rewarded with the hand of Ilsetilsone, and the richest crown of the east! I hold in my arms the object of my gratitude, and that  
of

of my love: Ah! why conceal yourself from me under the appearance of a cook?

“Most illustrious commander of the faithful,” replied Simoustapha, “the divine charms of Ifetilsone early made a lively impresson on my soul: Scarcely was she animated with the first breath of life, when I felt myself inflamed with love; the desire of possessing her bore absolute sway in my heart. A sage Persian, of whom I was the pupil, pointed out to me the road to happiness; and proposed that I should go to Bagdad, and there breathe the only air which would agree with my health, which declined every day. As my father put the most complete confidence in him, he easily obtained his consent, by concealing from him the true motive of an absence upon which my repose and felicity depended. Thanks to his contrivance, the son of a great king of the Indies fixed himself in a situation to which he owed the pleasure of seeing and being seen by her whom he adored.

“Death soon deprived me of that wise governor, but it could not rob me of the secrets with which he intrusted me: Young, the dupe of my passion, inexperienced, I fell a victim to love.—If this offend you, and wound the too sensible heart of a father, my head is at your feet, punish it alone; but I implore your paternal

affection for the innocent princess, whose whole fault consists in her love for Simoustapha."

The caliph, moved with such an affecting acknowledgment, tenderly lifts up the young prince, and having embraced him afresh, "Come, my dear son! said he to him, let us dissipate the grief you have occasioned; let your presence dispel the clouds which have raised improper suspicions in the heart of the most affectionate of mothers."

Zobeida was alone with her daughter, and was demanding from her an explanation of the conduct of the old governess, at the very moment when the Indian prince entered to diffuse joy and delight. Simoustapha, with the royal fillet on his head, and displaying the brilliant tassel with which it is ornamented, was introduced to the wife of the caliph and her daughter.— "Receive from the hands of the great prophet and mine," said their sovereign, "you, a son-in-law, and you, a husband. This is Simoustapha, the son of the great king of the Indies, the most ancient, the most powerful, and the most faithful of my allies." Then addressing himself to his attendants: "Get the cadi and the musti instantly:—Open the mosques:—Let all my people celebrate this joyful festival:—Let the poor receive my alms:—Let all Bagdad participate of the joy of the sovereign; and  
let

let it diffuse itself into the most remote quarters of my empire. Behold my deliverer! my son-in-law; and the protector of the standard of religion! The duty of gratitude is above every law."

Isfetilsone and her husband are lodged in the most beautiful apartment of the palace; he partakes of the labours and the amusements of the caliph; sits at his right hand in the divan; and nothing is done without his advice. An unlimited confidence establishes between them a perfect intimacy.

The caliph did not fail to inform himself of all the extraordinary means used by his son-in-law for the success of his wishes. Simouftapha owns his supernatural protection; he tells him of the queen of the genii, of the powers that were inclosed in the box and in the ring; but he conceals the complaisance of Namouna, and the part she had acted in the intrigue. It is easy to perceive the reasons for this conduct.

Haroun, already familiarised to marvellous adventures, easily believed Simouftapha. He did not blame him for availing himself of magic, the study of which he had encouraged in his court. He found fault with him, however, for having neglected to inform the king of the Indies of the fortune of his only son. "His inquiry,"

tude," answered the prince, " must be very much alleviated by looking upon the rose-bush which my tutor Benalab left in the garden of the palace : It gives a daily account of my adventures, fortunate or not ; and, since I have had the good fortune to be loaded with the favours of the greatest sovereign upon earth, the bush must this day show him that I have attained the summit of prosperity.

Simoustapha thought very justly in this respect. The king and queen of the Indies contemplated the rose-bush every day ; it only cast off the flowers with which it was loaded, to give way to more beautiful ones ; and thus they consoled themselves during the absence of their son, convinced that nothing bad had befallen him. This day they were very agreeably surprised ; they saw a blossom of a rose, already blown, expand still more fresh and brilliant. This phenomenon appeared to them quite extraordinary, but it would have been necessary for them to have been at Bagdad, in order to find out the meaning of it.

Isfetilsone had just given birth to a young prince ; Simoustapha, Haroun, and Zobeida were full of joy ; all the faithful Mussulmans celebrate with festivals this happy event. The caliph named the child Haroun-Ben-Alraschid.

The

The queen of the genii presided at his birth, and endowed him with her art. In the meanwhile, the commander of the faithful and his son-in-law implored what was more essential for him in the great mosque at Bagdad.

Every thing presaged to the family of the caliph an uninterrupted course of prosperity ; but a cloud gathered against it in Egypt. Naraes, the son of Mamouk the magician, attentive to the fountain which was to regulate his proceedings, perceived its water troubled : He sent two spirits to the assistance of his father ; but the water is soon tinged with blood ; he saw that his power had been ineffectual, that Mamouk was dead ; he, therefore, breathes nothing but vengeance. The last chamber, by his magic wand, had pointed to him all the adventures of Mamouk at the house of Simoustapha : He furnishes himself with every thing that he imagines can contribute to his success, and sets out for Bagdad. It is no longer into the house of a private person that he must introduce himself ; it is into the palace of the caliph. Naraes, it is true, has a great advantage over his father : He is powerful and active, he has no need to have recourse to so many wiles, in order to associate another with him, for the first who comes can answer his purpose.

Naraes,



Naraes, after much fatigue, and many by-roads, arrives, like his father, at the Ilfara and the Aggiala. Here a poor fisher-man, who has taken nothing with his net during the whole day, is bemoaning his bad luck : How shall he be able to maintain his family ?

The magician, who had already discovered the cause of his grief, accosts him, and puts a piece of gold into his hand : " Console yourself, good man," said he to him, " I sympathise with you, in seeing you labour without success ; but you don't know the proper bait : Quit your net, take a line, and, at the distance of a few paces from hence, you will find, under a rock, a fish of a singular species : I am going to collect a little earth, of which I will make a ball, and bedew it with a strange sort of water. With this charm you must let your line fall from the top of the rock, and, by having a little patience, you will catch a beautiful fish. This uncommon fish appears now and then in these rivers ; and this is the season of it. It is called *Sultan Hibrain*, from the name of the patriarch who preserved its species. After you shall have taken it, you must not carry it to the caliph ; this sovereign contents himself, upon the whole, with too frugal fare ; but take my advice, and sell it to the prince Simouftapha, who will give you what you ask for it : I have not

time

time to stop at present to witness your success; I must return to my warehouse. I am the first dealer in china, as you enter at the right hand by the great gate of the Kan; come to me to-morrow morning, I will give you one or two bottles full of my water, and we shall perhaps spend the day in fishing: He now gives him another piece of gold: "Here, this will compensate for the time that I may have made you lose; or it will serve for an earnest in what I shall employ you to-morrow." He now leaves the fisherman, who had already struck the rock, and who patiently waits for what Naraes had promised.

Simoustapha and Ilsetilfone never dreamed that a dangerous stratagem was going on against them at the river. They had, with the consent of the caliph, been paying a visit to the amiable sovereign of the genii, who had loaded them with kindness. Ilsetilfone had observed in the palace of the queen of the fairies a bird distinguished for its brilliant and variegated plumage: It had been created in order to inhabit the terrestrial paradise; but, having refused homage to Solomon, that it might pay it to Kokopilefobe, it was banished to Ginnistan: Familiar, confident, full of charms, this beautiful bird remembered the past, guessed at the present, and foresaw the future. It spoke little; but

but what it said was very well understood by those who had been accustomed to hear it.

The beautiful princess of the Indies became very fond of this bird; Setelpedour eagerly embraced the opportunity of obliging her darling princess anew, by praying her to accept it. "I give you," said the queen to her, "a very interesting little creature; it appears to me to be very much inclined to attach itself to you, and it will give you excellent advices; take care to listen to them, and overlook none of them; Besides, although it be at your house, and in your amiable hands, it will not believe that it is in exile; for it has, I know not how, got into its little head that it will not be able to get back to its native country but by travelling upon the earth. See, there is its cage; it does not shut. It is impossible to confine it; it goes and comes as it pleases; but, before you take it away, it must leave me something here. "Come, little bird, give me two of thy feathers." Upon this, the little creature presents its tail, and two feathers remain, without her pulling them, in the hands of the queen.

The two consorts having thanked the fairy, set out with the bird and its cage for the palace of the caliph. They enter into their own, where the eunuch Hachim, the principal cook, had purchased an excellent fish still alive; it is called,

called, said he, Sultan Hibraim, because the patriarch regaled Mahomet with it at Medina. The excellent cook gave but a very indistinct account of its genealogy, for, probably, he received no better from the fisherman; but he had given sixty sequins for the fish.

Every body was curious to see this creature; it was allowed to bathe in a large silver basin, in the water of the river from whence it was taken. The water in which it was seemed to be filled with topaz, rubies, and emeralds: Its head appeared to be covered with a helmet of gold, the crest of which was set with pearls: The shell of the half of its body, being a great deal larger than that towards its tail, tinged with purple, and embroidered with gold, exhibited a superb covering; its fins, which were of the colour of coral, were blended with spots of an azure hue.

“O what a beautiful fish! How exquisite!” exclaimed Simoustapha and Ilsetilsone by turns.

Fy, fy, fy, fy! cried the bird in its own language, and with a tone impatient to pierce their ears.

“This beautiful bird has a disgusting cry,” said the princess; “it gives me a head-ach.—But see here is a beautiful fish! look at its eye, it has something tender.”

“Bad, bad, bad, bad! cried the bird, in a tone still more piercing.”

“My dear Simoustapha,” said the princess, “if this bird has such a piercing note, I shall not be able to keep it: I like this fish a great deal better.”

“Worse, worse, worse, worse!” cried the bird, increasing every time the eagerness of the notes which proceeded from its little gullet.

Oh! the foolish bird, notwithstanding its beautiful plumage, said Ifsetilsone.—We have a reservoir for our baths, I will keep my charming fish there: I will feed it with my own hand. Do they call thee sultan? thou shalt be my sultan.

“No, no, no, no!” cried the bird, quite provoked; and, flying at the same time out of its cage, it darts into the basin, at the risk of drowning itself, and destroys the eyes of the fish. It attacks its head, and tears off the pearls of the crest displayed upon the helmet: The fish resists; Ifsetilsone wishes to defend it; but the bird escapes from her, and pecks the fish in all the most tender parts of its body: The princess catches it at last, and, for fear of letting it escape again, she squeezes it so close in her hands as to suffocate it.

Simoustapha, who sees this scene, knows not what to think of the bird and the fish; the latter,

ter, although expiring, still resisted, and the bason was filled with its blood : They no longer perceived the fish ; the prince, terrified with this prodigy, calls the genius of the ring, which appears immediately.

Inform me, says Simoustapha, from whence is this quantity of blood that this fish has lost, and still loses?

“ This bird,” answered the genius, “ has delivered you from a man who came here in order to assassinate you : He is the Egyptian Naraes, the son of Mamouk, the last of your enemies. He transformed himself into a fish, and suffered himself to be taken by the poor fisherman who brought him to you.”

“ Carry him in this same bason,” said the prince, “ to the queen of the genii, that she may do with him what she pleases.” The slave instantly disappears, in order to execute the orders of his master.

Simoustapha had not had time to cast his eyes upon his wife ; he perceives her forrowful, and eager to recover the bird which she had deprived of life ; she attempts to warm it in her bosom, and her eyes are bathed with tears. “ What is the matter with you ?” asked the prince.

“ I have been very unfortunate !” said she to him ; “ I have killed this charming, this ex-



cellent bird, which devoted its life to preserve mine. Besides, the queen of the genii parted with it, to give it up to an unreasonable fantastic being, to a murdering hand! I shall never have the confidence to appear before my benefactress again: How I pity you, my dear Simoustapha! the queen, your box, your ring, and your wisdom, might have defended you from your enemies; but who shall be able to screen you from the dangers which may result from my caprice?"

"Your wise reflections," answered the prince, more affected by the sorrow of his wife than by the dangers to which he had been exposed, "Why lay the whole blame upon yourself? Ought not I to blame myself for not having given you proper counsel? In the situation in which we stand, exposed to dangerous surprises, should I have given ear to the ridiculous history which the eunuch gave us of that fish? I who, instructed by my experience, have been deceived by the beauty of a fruit which I had brought into my house, why should I neglect to have recourse to my box, instead of admiring, like you, the beautiful shell of a disguised monster! Moderate your sorrow, my dear Ifsetilsone, that I may appear excusable in my own eyes: It is my duty to go and throw myself at the feet of the queen."

queen of the genii, to obtain pardon for my culpable neglect."

" You shall not go far," said Setelpedour, presenting herself suddenly to the two consorts. " you reproach yourselves so sincerely for your faults that it were cruelty to make you feel them any more; embrace me, and let us be wiser for the future."

But this beautiful bird! said the princess sorrowfully.—I have taken care of it, said the queen; here are two feathers which I have reserved, in case its courage should expose it too much to danger: We have a remedy for fairy-birds. Setelpedour at the same time takes the animal, and returns it its two feathers: The bird is instantly upon its legs; it spreads its wings, shakes them, exults for joy, flutters up and down the apartment, and rests alternately on the shoulders of the fairy, the finger of Simouftapha, and the bosom of the princess, chirping in its own language the pleasures of its re-animation: It returns into the cage, where it begins to eat, and forthwith emits the most melodious notes.

Ilsetilsone by degrees resumed her gaiety: " My good friends," says the queen, " we will sup, and spend part of the night together: I cannot be long absent from Ginnistan; and I wish to employ, to the best advantage, all the

time which I can spare from it: Simouftapha will cause us be served by Jemal and his little mute; let us leave pomp to those who know not the value of liberty. Besides, I must not be seen by every body; my subjects already complain that I am too fond of the earth; and we have affairs to converse about which require silence and secrecy."

Setelpedour seated herself between the comforts, whom she loaded with friendly caresses: She relates to them the vengeance she had inflicted upon the magician Naraes; for she had chained him with Dasouk, that detestable genius, the associate and the accomplice of all the crimes of the Egyptian: They had been tumbled into the lake of brimstone, where the father of Naraes had ended his days. "Your dangers are lessened," added the queen; "but you are not yet secure against them all; in proportion as I deliver you from your enemies, my partiality for you constantly raises up new ones.

"Hitherto I have had nothing but the natural innate malice of my subjects to dread: Now it is necessary to prevent their stratagems; they affect to despise my orders; I watch them, and a bright ray must immediately dart through their dark designs. At present I explain myself no farther; I must provide for my own security above all things, and discover the dangers which

which threaten me : It is now of the greatest importance, my dear Simoustapha, to be assured of your affection."

" My heart is your's," exclaimed the prince with emotion, scarcely master of his joy. " I will never banish the dear Ifsetilsone," replied Setelpedour.—" I will remain with you," said Ifsetilsone, " in order to enable you to complete your conquest ; espouse Simoustapha ; preserve the throne on which you are seated, and I shall be at the summit of my wishes."

" What say you to it, prince ?" says the queen.—" I belong to Ifsetilsone, who may dispose of me as she pleases," added Simoustapha.

" Charming couple !" exclaimed Setelpedour ; " the one had convinced me that man may be passionately loved, the other reconciles me to every female. You make me feel the power of merit upon virtuous hearts ! Adieu," says she, rising from table ; " be feeling, noble, and generous : To you I am indebted for the most exquisite joys ; no imprudence of mine shall ever distress you !". Setelpedour leaves them, carrying with her the plighted faith of the consorts, who, on that account, are no less dear to each other.

We will omit an account of the sensations which the three lovers felt at parting, their daily

ly visits, the moments which Setelpedour could steal from the concerns of her court.

The months roll on without any remarkable event, and without any particular emotion, either of passion or of interest. Simouftapha beheld, with pleasure, his charming family increase around him, which was augmented with a daughter. He was closely engaged in the affairs of the state, the load of which fell, in a great measure, upon him; and, when he did not go to Ginnistan, he exercised himself in the amusements of the chase.

Having forgot the dangers which he had surmounted, he overlooked the stratagems to which he was exposed. He was perhaps too vain in not constantly confiding in the aid which he might have expected from his ring or his box. Armed with his scymitar, and mounted upon his beautiful steed, he rejoiced in trusting his fortune and the strength of his arm to the display of his courage. He had read in the instructions of Benalab a maxim which tended to inspire him with self-confidence. "When man's own powers are sufficient, he ought to have no recourse to supernatural aid." The sage should have added, "when supernatural aid shall have added fresh vigour to your faculties, never let fall your arms." But Benalad had not fore-

seen

seen every thing ; Benalab could not write every thing.

One day, at the chace, Simouftapha met with a stag ; he attacks it, but it flies off with amazing speed. The horse, however, which carried the prince, soon gets within reach of it ; a javelin is launched, and it is wounded upon the shoulder. The javelin, though it pierces it through, is fixed in such a situation as not in the least to retard the animal, which now doubles its speed. The courser too which pursued it does not lose an inch of ground. One would say that one flash of lightening was preceded by another. The prince loses breath ; but the ardour with which he is animated augments his vigour, and he is instantly out of reach of his people.

At last, at the close of the day, the stag stops, and on a sudden disappears ; a violent gust of wind throws the prince from his horse, and close beside him he finds a frightful beast. The ears of this monster fell upon its breast ; its terrible mouth extended from ear to ear ; its lips were enormously thick ; and its flat nostrils exhaled an infectious vapour. In the middle of a large forehead, it had an eye which supplied the place of the departing day ; for it diffused a pale light like that emitted from the sulphureous combustibles of a vulcano.

Upon



Upon seeing this ghastly spectre, Simousta-pha first recommended his soul to God, invoking him by Mahomet, and then faced it with intrepidity. The spectre appeared to be astonished with his fortitude, but was no less confident of victory over a man who was alone, and almost disarmed.

Despicable Mussulman! said the spectre to him, slave of a slave! thou must just now suffer the punishment which hath been already denounced against Benalab thy master; thou must receive the chastisement which is due to thy pride for ever presuming to command the genii, whom thou art unworthy to obey; thou must here answer for thy insolence, thy injustice, the tyranny of thy deceitful queen Setelpedour, against my master, the great Bahlisboull. Fall! die his victim, and his slave! At these words, the hateful monster raises its enormous club, the knobs of which are pointed with diamonds, and prepares to dispatch Simousta-pha: The valiant prince avoids the blow, and with his scymitar cleaves the spectre from the crown of the head to the waist.

In an instant, the ears of Simousta-pha are stunned with hideous shrieks and howlings, which the horrible darkness with which he was surrounded rendered still more frightful. But the conqueror of the spectre is not to be terrified: His  
steed

steed approached it, and demonstrated by his neighings, and the kindness he shows to his master, how he exulted in the victory. The howlings cease, the illusion is dissipated; but, unfortunately, the Indian prince falls a prey to real dangers.

Simoustapha, surrounded with the shades of night, and unable to observe any of the places which he had hurried over on his swift steed, is perfectly ignorant where he is. He finds it impossible for him to judge at what distance he is from Bagdad. Worn out with fatigue, he lies down upon the grass: He waits for the arising of Aurora, that next morning he may direct his course towards Bagdad, and lets his steed range in quest of food around him.

The prince now perceives his imprudence in venturing out alone without his box and his ring. The power, however, which rendered him conqueror of the monster, and which had enabled him to cleave the spectre in two, re-animates him. He sleeps under the protection of that power which destroyed the infernal monsters, by the intervention of the meanest atom.

Simoustapha was very far from believing that he was at so great a distance from the princess, that it would take him years to reach her by the ordinary route. A powerful charm had  
trans-

transported him to the summit of Mount Caucasus.

The spectre, which had been enjoined by Bahlisboull to destroy the Indian prince, having transformed itself into a stag, hurried him along in the pursuit. It allowed itself to be struck with the javelin which was launched at it, and instantly enchanted the hand which threw it; thus the consort of the beautiful Ilsetilsone, bound by the charm, was carried along with the same rapidity as the spectre itself.

Whilst Simoustapha was in the arms of sweet sleep, the spirits, who had witnessed the combat in which their master had fallen, having become weak on account of his defeat, winged their way to the deserts of Upper Egypt, whither their chief had retired. Such a disorderly and instant return, throws Bahlisboull into great consternation; but, upon hearing the particulars of the combat, when he finds that Rastras was cleft by the Indian prince, he flies into the most violent rage. He meditates on every scheme of vengeance that might tend to efface the insult offered to his power. Since their enchantments have no effect, the hero must be beset with ordinary dangers, by rendering his route almost impracticable. He must be exhausted by fatigue and hunger to such a degree, that despair may succeed these two calamities: He must

must fall a prey to ferocious animals, when the want of strength shall abandon him defenceless to their fury ! But Setelpedour must be ignorant both of the time and place of so great cruelty.

This very instant the old genius assembles the spirits which had been banished into the country which he inhabits, and whom he recollected the very moment they arrived. Depart, says he to them, and surround the Indian prince, whom you will find, as you descend Mount Caucasus, with a thick fog which shall hinder him from reaching any part of Ginnistan. The genii cheerfully obeyed the orders of the maleficent prince ; and, whilst they go to steal Simoustapha from the genii who protected him, Setelpedour sees all the cavalry of Bagdad dispersed in the fields, and scampering through the cities, the towns, the hamlets, and the forests, in order to demand him of every object in nature. The caliph is quite impatient to find his son-in-law, who is dearer to him than the child whom he most tenderly loves. He spreads a report in the apartment of the females, that Simoustapha was obliged to depart suddenly, to execute a secret commission for him of the last importance. Zobeida and her daughter might be hoodwinked, but Setelpedour was not to be imposed upon.

The queen of the genii instantly dispatches, into the open country, the most active and intelligent spirits she had, and those whom she believed to be most devoted to her interest, in order to preserve a favourite whose ruin they secretly desired. They skim over the whole earth, but bring back no notice that can alleviate the distress of the queen: They saw the fog perfectly well which descended from Mount Caucasus, but none of them took the trouble to examine it. Setelpedour is inconsolable.

There was at the court of the genii an old gnome named Bakbak: She was a great favourite, for she had nothing malevolent in her temper; her fault was, that she wished to know every thing, to speak continually, upon every subject. She had been for a long time expelled the divan, because every one there was to speak in one's turn. She had a very young little nephew named Jazzel, whom she treated as if he had been her own son.

This gnome had taken part neither for nor against Setelpedour, in order that she might judge candidly of her conduct on every occasion. She heard of the deputation, which had been sent into every quarter of the globe, to trace out the Indian prince.

"Go,"

“Go,” said she to Jazzel, “thou hast need to pick up information; thou hast wings quite new, which will not fail thee soon; fly from one side to another, perch upon eminences, and thus thou shalt have an extensive prospect. Glance upon the earth, and bring me the news; listen to the inhabitants as thou passest; they speak a great deal at random, but a genius ought to be able to comprehend part of every thing. Thou shalt afterwards come and give me an account of whatever thou shalt have seen and heard; and if I shall be pleased with thee, I will teach thee the secret of pleasing her whom thou lovest best. In the mean time, I will put a sort of oil upon thy wings, which shall make thee fly four times swifter than the rest.

Jazzel sets out after the genii, glad to try his new plumage. He soars above the rest, and sees them separate from one another in order to execute their commission: None of them approaches the earth for food; if they alight, it is for the sake of repose. If they come near its inhabitants, it is to play some trick upon them; but they endeavour to pick up no information.

Jazzel chanced to take the same route with those who were to inspect Mount Caucasus; he perceives the fog; he wishes to see through it; but it is too thick for his eyes, which are



not as yet very piercing. The emissaries of Setelpedour skim along far above it, without examining it. At length, having descried people at the foot of the mountain, he stops to hear what they would say.

Behold, said they, a very thick and infectious fog! How is it possible for it to have risen from the sands, where there is not a drop of water? It is a very extraordinary phenomenon; there is surely something very malignant within it; it forebodes some calamity!

Jazzel picks up this observation as he passes, and continues his route; to this he adds other trifling particulars, collected here and there, in order that he may be able to give an account of them to his old aunt; for the secret she had promised to disclose to him sticks in his heart. As soon as he sees the emissaries of the queen return, he flies back to Bakbak, and gives her a more faithful account of his expedition than they do of their's to Setelpedour.

The gnome weighs every circumstance. "Do you see," says she, "how the affairs of our queen are conducted since she has got in love?—Is this so great a fault? I think that I could pardon it myself.—But, no, no, no.—A man! fy, a man! Well! there are both good and bad!—But, Jazzel, do you not tell me that these peasants were speaking of the phenomenon during the

the thick mist, and that there was something malignant in it? I will talk to our queen about it;" and immediately the old gnome trots off to relate to Setelpedour the discoveries which the young genius had made in his journey.

The queen heard her with patience; and, as soon as she had discovered, from the raving of the old Bakkak, the negligence of her emissaries, she naturally presumes that there is something suspicious in the fog. She therefore instantly arms herself with her whole power, and has recourse to every expedient. Although a great part of her subjects have betrayed her, yet, in spite of both them and the elements, she shows herself to be the grand-daughter of Kokopilefobe.

The caliph, on the other hand, alarmed by the fruitless researches which he had caused be made, and still unable to suggest his fears to Zobeida and his daughter, availed himself of the grand festival of the Haraphat\*. Here, with more than usual solemnity, he offers the sacrifices, by which the faithful Mussulmans endeavour to procure the favours of heaven, and the signal protection of the great prophet.

O 3 *Haroun*

\* *Haraphat*. A mountain of Arabia, upon which those who make a pilgrimage to Mecca commonly offer sacrifices. Here they slaughter the victims, and throw them down headlong.

Haroun, surrounded with the mufti, and the principal priests, sacrifices, with his own hand, two yellow heifers fifteen months old, and two sheep of the largest kind. And he accompanies these testimonies of devotion with the most fervent prayers for the preservation, and the return of Simouftapha. The people re-echo them by their vows.

Whilst sadness reigns in the palace, Zobeida conceals her grief from her daughter. The princess finds herself alone, and destitute of consolation; the queen of the genii comes no more; every object around her wears a doleful aspect; tears flow from every eye; Namouna sobs: Ilsetilsone can support it no longer; she throws herself upon a sofa, and pours forth the most doleful lamentations.

"Peace, peace, peace!" cries the beautiful bird.—"Peace?" says she, "Alas! there is no more peace for me: Simouftapha is dead!"

"No, no, no!" cried the bird.—"How! charming bird, not dead? Lives he still? Shall I see him again?"

"Yes, yes, yes!"—"When will that happy moment arrive!"—"Soon, soon, soon!"—

"How much you comfort me! Weep no more then, my good Namouna, we shall see Simouftapha again." She then takes her pretty bird and caresses it: Thou savest my life, dear bird!

says

says she to it, and I did every thing to take away thine, can I ever forgive myself!"

It is worthy of remark, that, in all the distress of the princess, no suspicion of jealousy was ever mixed with it; She had not seen the queen of the genii since the departure of her husband, and she did not imagine her capable of carrying him off. Zobeida was not so easy in this respect; but she would not discover it. As to the caliph, his own religion, and that of his son-in-law, removed his fears.

The Star of the Seven Seas soon reached the summit of Mount Caucasus; she perceives the fog, the work of the malignant Bahlisboul. The winds, which she raised suddenly, dissipated these vapours: And she at last sees the idol of her soul, pale, exhausted, dejected, and in a situation fitted to melt the most obdurate heart.

For ten day, Simoustrapha, amid frightful desarts, could only direct his course by the stars; he knew not what part of the globe he was traversing: He raked up the roots with his sabre, or climbed the trees for wild and unknown fruits, to abate the cravings of hunger. He travelled the whole day, increasing, by his own impatience, that of his noble courser: He fell in with an immense desert; another of boundless extent presents itself to his view; he passes

passes the night upon the cold earth, and is subjected, during the day, to the fatigues and the influence of a scorching inhospitable climate.

The Indian prince, worn out with so many hardships, stopped by the side of a spring to quench his burning thirst: When about to stoop towards the stream, a lion, springing suddenly from the neighbouring forest, darts upon the hero's steed. Simoustapha immediately draws his scymitar, divides, at one blow, the scull of the lion, and brings him to the ground: The horse bounded for joy; but the prince, exhausted by this last effort, falls motionless on the grass: It was in this situation he was perceived by the queen of the genii.

At the sight of the dangers to which the Indian prince had been exposed by the black enchantments of Bahlisboull, Setelpedour, animated by vengeance and love, wished to gratify at once the passions with which she was overpowered: Love, however, prevails: She hurries towards the earth, and, with the most lively caresses, restores to the light him whom the shades of death appeared to surround.

She reanimates the object of her affection, by the demonstrations of her tenderness alone, and makes use of no other magic except that of love. She soon perceives his eyes sparkle with

a lustre, which she preferred to all the rays of light that the objects around her continually reflected ; and, that she may increase his happiness, she endeavours to animate them more. Simoustapha, having recovered his speech and intellectual faculties, finds himself in the arms of her whom he had invoked to no purpose some moments before, because he had neglected the means of his own safety. His panting heart forbids him to put upon her lips the seal of his gratitude.

“ I understand what you mean,” said the queen ; “ but think of nothing of that sort till you recover your health and vigour.” She now rises : The first shrub she meets with furnishes her with a twig, with which she draws a circle round Simoustapha. She finds beside her the plants which were necessary for the enchantment which she was about to prepare ; and the words which she pronounces inspires it with the essential virtues. In an instant the Indian prince experiences a happy change. In a moment he recovers all his vigour ; he rises, and with rapture kisses the beneficent hands to which he owed such timely aid. All the sentiments of his heart strive for vent at once ; and, though they burst forth without the least order, they seem to be no less dear to her who is the object of his affection. At the same time, however, he discovers  
the



the most exquisite inquietude upon account of Ifetilsone.

“ Console yourself, my dear Simoustapha ! says Setelpedour to him ; my thoughts have centered wholly upon you, since you were in danger. By being at too great a distance, however, from my palace, a conspiracy has been formed, which has turned out too much to the advantage of your enemies. Besides, your consort, being almost always with her mother, I contented myself in having left with her an intelligent creature, which will not fail to console her. It is my little bird : Its advices are not tiresome ; for it speaks but one word, but that can be infallibly depended upon. Now, since you are restored, we will take our route towards the palace. You must have need of food after the long abstinence you have had, and I will forthwith conduct you to your amiable consort.

Upon this, the queen ordered her car to approach the earth : Three clouds, variegated with all the colours of the rainbow, descend and present two seats, much more commodious than the best sophas one can imagine. Setelpedour and the prince take their seats ; the latter began to feel uneasy on account of his courser ; but the queen had anticipated his desire. For he perceives his steed cleave the atmosphere with his  
gilded

gilded wings, close beside the fine seat on which the loving couple set out for Ginnistan.

As they skim along, Simoustapha wishes to relate his adventures. Setelpedour interrupts him. "Let us here consign to oblivion the snares which have been laid for you: I know all the dark designs of my enemies; I am not ignorant of their malice, and of the torments which they have occasioned to you: But we are now, my dear Simoustapha, surrounded with the beauties of nature. Here I could wish to remain with you, were it not giving a fatal blow to two hearts, the happiness of which interests me as much as that of my own. Speak to me about love, and let us forget both the perfidious measures which they have entered into against us, and the vengeance which we ought to inflict upon them."

"Ah! who would not forget them," says the prince, transported with love, "in presence of the most beautiful object under heaven, who is satisfied with being loved; and who, although she deserves to have altars erected to her, only strives to oblige others, and furnishes all the sacrifices herself!"

The clouds stopped before the gates of the palace: Simoustapha is there served with condensed perfumes, under the most alluring forms, and the most agreeable colours; his stomach is  
braced

braced without being loaded; and he restores his usual appetite,

“ Let us depart,” says Setelpedour; “ Let us go and sup with our dear Ilsetilfone; let us carry to her some of these ragouts; I shall be very happy to let her perceive the flavour of them; I have nothing that I would not share with her; I would even divide my power with her, did I value it more.”

“ Let us go,” says Simoustapha; “ but, will you first inform me why you depreciate the power which affords us so much enjoyment.”

“ Let us mount our chariot,” says the queen; “ that is meet only to be told in private.— It is because it prevents me from espousing one whom I passionately love.”

The prince and the queen of the fairies did not arrive without being announced; this was the office of the pretty bird: Zobeida had just left her daughter's room, when the charming creature began to cry Simoustapha!

“ Simoustapha!” answered Namouna.—

“ What dost thou say, my dear bird?” says the princess. The little prattler, however, answered nothing but Simoustapha! Simoustapha!

“ Where? from what quarter?” said Namouna, running like one distracted toward the gate which led to the palace.

In

In the mean time, the company, which the bird had announced, arrived by the window. Simoustapha is in the arms of Ilsetilsone, whom he loads with tears and kisses; the queen of the genii likewise embraces him; and the little bird, flapping its wings, cried, brave! brave! brave!

When this first transport was over, they sit down; they prattle, they relate stories; sometimes they speak all three together. One would have imagined that they had not seen one another for an age. At length the repast is served up. In such circumstances, even although something had been wanting in the palace of the caliph, one may easily perceive how many things they could have dispensed with.

Namouna, who had had a short journey for nothing, immediately returns, attracted by the noise, to listen at the back-door. "Enter, good Namouna, enter!" says Setelpedour to her, a little surpris'd at the curiosity of the old gnome; "Are you curious to see me?"—"Yes, madam; I see that you are as good as beautiful."—"You are very obliging, Namouna; and I wish to do you some service."—"Ah! madam, that is very easy to you who can do all things;—pray madam, make me young again."—"I have a preferable piece of service to render you; it is to wish you continual good health; and my skil-

ful little bird is going to impart the secret to you."

"Sleep! sleep! sleep!" says the bird.

"I know this as well as it does," says Namouna; "yet I am not a forcerefs, madam."—"But, suppose I give you a potion, which, by lulling you asleep, shall restore to you the bloom and vigour of youth?"—"Give me only the hundredth part of your's, madam, and I shall think myself more beautiful than the full moon."—"Come, Namouna, be not uneasy: You delight in chearfulness; I wish you to possess more grace than ever: You shall have dimples in your cheeks, a charming shape, and a handsome little foot."—"I thank you, madam." Ilsetilsone dismisses her governess; the repast is ended; and the queen of the genii returned to Ginnistan.

Simoustapha re-entered the palace after the caliph had retired:—It was improper to disturb his repose, and they put off till the morrow the good news which they had to impart to him. In the mean time, joy reigned throughout all the apartments of the young prince; the eunuchs awaked all the slaves, who rise up, and receive from Namouna an account of all that she has seen: They all give themselves up to transports of joy. She had well nigh wrought

a happy change in the organs of the little mute, by restoring him his speech.

As soon as the caliph had opened his eyes Simouftapha was at his feet ; they load each other with careffes : The fovereign instantly caufes communicate to Zobeida a piece of news which fo materially concerned his happinefs and peace.

The Muczins soon gained the top of the minarets, to fummmon the people to the mosques. Thanksgivings were due to the Almighty and his great prophet : The empire of the Muffulmans had juft recovered the hero to whom it was indebted for all its luftre.

The diminution of taxes, the diffufion of alms, the releafe of prifoners, the noife of warlike instruments, the military festivals, all confpired to testify the joy of the commander of the faithful, and to augment the happinefs of the people, who, at laft, faw their hero again.

The Indian prince imparted to his family the adventures which had fo unfortunately mifled him from Bagdad. He agreed with them in blaming himfelf for having neglected fupernatural aid, with which his protectrefs and the Persian philofopher had furnifhed him. He likewise related in what manner the beneficent queen of the fairies had delivered him from the



snared into which his imprudence had cast him: He laid great stress on the most trifling particulars, and spoke with an animation which alarmed Zobeida.

She seized the first moment she could find to mention him to her daughter. "Don't you feel uneasy," said she to her, "on account of the attachment of the queen of the genii for your husband, and on account too of the excess of gratitude with which he appears to be penetrated?"

I, Madam! replied Ifsetilsone, I jealous of the kindness with which the queen loads us! Ah! notwithstanding her power and her amiable qualities, had she in my eyes no other merit than that of discovering of Simoustapha's, she would become the idol of my heart. If there is one star in heaven captivated with the charms and virtues of my husband, it should become my sun.

"Either love has a strange effect on my daughter," says Zobeida to herself, "or she has less of my mind in her than of her father's; for I would not be content were I in her place.

The caliph had listened with great attention to the relation of the last adventures of Simoustapha. He made him also relate all those which had preceded them since the marriage of the prince with his daughter; and he ordered

to make out a register of them, and deposit it among his records.

The Indian prince reassumed his seat in the private councils of the caliph, and in the divan. He likewise continued to join, to his usual employments, the agreeable pleasure of going and paying homage to the amiable queen of the genii, who never received the visit of the two consorts without returning it next night, or without loading them with new favours. She desired *Ilsetilsone* to come and spend a few days in her palace; the princess, however, had to obtain leave from the caliph, which he granted with pleasure.

Haroun did not choose that his daughter, upon whom the queen of the genii had heaped so many presents, should appear at her palace with empty hands. Neither did he wish that she should be withdrawn any more from his sight by the effect of magic; a circumstance which had given his people so great uneasiness, and which had opened their eyes upon objects of which he could have excused their ignorance. The caliph ordered his treasures to be thrown open to *Simoustapha*; and also every thing necessary to be prepared for the departure of his daughter, who was to spend the fine season at *Casser-il-Harais*, his country seat, which is at the distance of three days journey from Bagdad.

Caffer-il-Harais is a magnificent castle, situate on the banks of the Aggiala, of which the great prophet laid the first stone. Its front toward the gardens presents us with three hundred and sixty windows; the outside of it is veneered with alabaster, and marble from the east, coped with garlands of the most precious jasper; the doors, which are of aloes and sandal wood, turn upon hinges of gold; the inner part is inlaid and ceiled with rose-wood. Nothing can rival the beauty of the furniture, and the magnificence of the apartment; the ruby, the emerald, and the topaz, are here diffused with a lavish hand. Mahomet began and finished this superb edifice for the accommodation of his daughter Fatima, when she married Omar-Halab. During the latter period of the prophet's abode upon earth, he frequently repaired to this palace, to receive, by the ministry of the angel Gabriel, inspirations from on high. The pen with which he wrote the twelve last chapters of the Koran is preserved here in a chrystal rock, enriched with diamonds.

The garden which belonged to this palace was more beautiful than any upon earth. In this blissful retreat the atmosphere was always serene, and no cloud drew a veil over the sun.

The

The trees, preserving an eternal youth, were never cankered with corroding moss; and the wasting mildew never deprived their branches of the benefit of the sap; the leaves, the flowers, and the fruit, partook of the immortality of the trunk, and were continually renewed, without falling or withering.

The perfumes exhaled by these flowers exhausted not their substance; the air was filled with their odour; they were always defended from noxious insects and venomous reptiles: A refreshing rain preserved coolness and fertility in this delightful retreat.

Birds, adorned in the most gaudy plumage, sung in concert their melodious notes. In short, to complete these wonders, they varied every day, without any confusion in their situations, without any alteration of their species.

The entrance to this garden was shut against every person except the lawful successor of Mahomet and his family: Had a profane person entered it, he would have perceived only frightful desarts, from which the howling of wild beasts would have forced him to retire.

This is the place whither Simoustapha and his spouse were to resort; they will be at liberty to visit the queen of the genii, without seeming to withdraw from the palace: It will be supposed,

posed that they are absorbed in the enjoyments of the magnificent garden; it will be thought, that they are fed with ambrosia, and are drinking luxurious draughts of nectar.

Setelpedour is engaged in making preparations for their reception; but she has reason to fear that Bahlisboull may disturb the happy moments which she wishes them to enjoy. This monster had been tumbled into the remotest desarts of Upper Egypt, but she was unable to strip him of all his power: He was born a prince, and enjoyed every where, however unworthy of it, the privileges of his illustrious origin.

Upper Egypt is peopled with malignant spirits, the disgrace of Ginnistan, detested in heaven and on earth; they joyfully united under the orders of a genius created to command them. Their first expedition, in consequence of these orders, towards Mount Caucasus, had not been successful; but they would not have been discouraged by an entire defeat; rage supports them, and makes them blind to every danger. Created for action, their very nature forces them to enterprize.

Setelpedour, informed of the new resources of her enemy, endeavours to lay a snare for him, into which he may fall of his own accord. She doubly increases the barrenness of the place,  
already

already cursed, which Bahlisboull had chosen for his residence; he is forced to leave it: From hence he passes into a desert still more barren, and no where finds repose.

At last he discovers a little green turf, in the shade of a pillar of granite, which sheltered it from the scorching rays of the sun; he approaches, and seats himself upon it. Six feet from the ground, upon the base of the monument, he sees a hieroglyphic, and hastily reads, "Pillar, execute the orders of queen Setelpedour."

He had scarcely pronounced these words, when a chain of iron surrounds his body, and fastens it to the pillar. The desert immediately re-echoes with his bellowing; the monsters which inhabit it are alarmed, and constrained to abandon their holes. The genii, his attendants, filled with terror, forsake him; he remains alone in this frightful habitation; to his impotent rage, succeeds a calm stupidity. He casts his eyes at last upon his chains, and upon the fatal inscription, by the effect of which he was loaded with them: He had not run over all the hieroglyphic characters, when the information he had received completes his despair: It contains this terrible sentence: "Thou canst only be delivered by the power of a genius more wicked than thyself!" When the world



world arose into form from chaos; when the fountains of the great deep were opened, did another come forth from it? Can another Kokopilefobe be found, who is neither the grandfather nor the protector of the Star of the Seven Seas?

When Setelpedour had secured her quiet, she wished, in the mean time, to reward the old gnome for the service she had done her: She calls her: "Tell me, Bakbak, what I can do for you?"—"O queen," says the old woman, "you can do a great deal, and what you have done may be attended with much danger: Nobody doubts that it was I who spoke to you; for it is well known that, although I speak freely, I am discreet at bottom, and say nothing, at least very little. There is, however, a small favour you could do me, and which would have no bad consequences: For want of teeth I speak indistinctly, so that I have not the satisfaction of understanding myself; procure for me thirty-two teeth!"—"Every body would know of the present," answered the queen, "and you would draw upon yourself all the enemies you dread: I cannot in prudence do more, than fix four very firmly to your under jaw."

"Put in then," says the old woman, "these four teeth, they will not be against you."

Let

Let us leave the old Bakkak, to supply by her enchantments the ordinary resources of the toilette, and let us attend to the preparations for the journey which Simouftapha was to make with his spouse.

The treasures of the caliph are laid open to the prince; the collection of all the riches of the monarchs of the earth could not equal them; however, he sees nothing comparable to what he had seen at Ginnistan. He finds a scymitar, the hilt of which is ornamented with diamonds, so excellent and so well set, that they seem to form one entire piece; he is less struck with its brilliancy than with its size; this weapon might serve a warrior much above the ordinary stature; he is desirous to try if he can use it; he draws it from the scabbard, brandishes it for a moment, and appears surrounded with lightening, so sparkling is the steel of the blade: He endeavours to examine the mark, and discovers hieroglyphic signs which he does not understand; he immediately calls the genius of the box to give him the explanation of them: Jemal appears.

Observe these signs, says the prince to him.—Our queen alone, says he, can explain them to us, they are signs of power; but we know the scymitar; it fell from the formidable hands of Kokopilefobe, in the great combat  
which

which he lost against Mahomet ; the latter has since left it to his successor.

The prince of the Indies takes the scymitar, and presents it to the caliph, as the only gift worthy to be offered to the queen of the genii.

In the mean time, the escort, which was to accompany the consorts to the palace of Cassar-il-Harais, announced, by the noise of warlike instruments, his arrival at that of the caliph : It was composed of two thousand men on horseback, chosen from among the most distinguished of the youth in the armies of Haroun ; six hundred knights armed at all points, with a lance in their hand, and their arm loaded with a large shield, followed, attending the carriage of the princess, which was drawn by six of the most beautiful elephants in the Indies ; twelve camels were loaded with the baggage, and the eunuchs closed the rear.

Simoustapha, mounted upon his beautiful courser, kept near the carriage ; he was covered with arms, the plates of which, raised with threads of gold, were encrusted with diamonds : The horse, held by two grooms, neighed with joy, tossing its proud mane. Ifetilsone admired the gracefulness of her spouse, gently stroaked the courser, elated with the burden which he carried.

This

This splendid retinue took the road to the palace; the highways had been levelled; and there was no obstacle to retard their march: The dependencies of the castle were immense, and afforded convenient lodgings for all their train: None but Simousthapha and the princess were allowed to enter the garden. The beauty which they found there filled them with rapture; but there was a curiosity still more interesting to the princess: It was a tree, the fatal fruit of which destroyed the human race. A serpent surrounds the trunk, from which it can never depart; thick darkness covers its eyes: A bird of an azure hue, with its head and legs of the colour of gold, flutters constantly around the tree, perching upon all the branches successively; it sings none, but expresses its thoughts in the most correct Arabic.

When the bird had perceived the two comforts, it stretched out its bill as a sign of joy, and gave them the ordinary salutation: "All hail to the race of man; there is one God only, and Mahomet is his prophet!"

Isfetilsone was charmed with the prettiness of its accent, and the purity of its language; she is eager to interrogate it.

Charming bird, says she to it, are you happy to see us here?—You are children of the prophet; you have entered by the good gate;

you must go out by that which leads to heaven.—But we are going to Ginnistan.—It is a journey which man makes every day upon earth.—Do you disapprove of mine?—No; because you will bring back my wife, and our united endeavours may be able to recover our son whom you have left in the palace.—What! are you the father of the charming bird which I have, and which is so good?—It must become more so.—Why does not he speak as well as yourself?—Because he has not had time to learn, and because he turned his back upon the light, refusing homage to the chosen prophet of God.—And your wife?—My wife is at Ginnistan; she was inquisitive, and is now suffering for her folly: We go there sooner than we incline, and cannot return when we are willing.—Then she is with Setelpedour?—You are right.—Do you love Setelpedour?—I love every thing which comes pure from the hands of the Almighty: I shall see Setelpedour when she ceases to be a fairy.—Is it in her power to cease to be one?—She has only to wish it.—Do I act wrong in going to her?—You are obeying the decree of heaven without knowing it.—I am delighted with you, my pretty bird; allow me to bring your child to you.—He is a fairy, I would kill him; I can only see him at a particular time, and along  
with

with his mother.—Suffer me to eat of the fruit of this tree?—That is a womanish desire; it was thus that your first mother drew down upon herself and upon you the wrath of heaven; besides, there is the appearance of fruit only; you would eat nothing; and the serpent which you see would bite your heel; so that you would fall into real evil, without receiving any enjoyment.—That then is the tree of knowledge?—It is a symbol of it.—Where is the tree of life?—In the garden of the great prophet.—My pretty bird, since you know all things, tell me why the sea was made, and the time of its formation?—The Creator alone knows all things; the sea was created on the day when Kokopilefobe revolted and was punished; the rebels were employed in digging its channel.—My lovely bird, may I eat of the other fruits which are here?—Go into the pavilion at the end of that walk; an entertainment is there prepared for you: It is the place where Mahomet retired to say his prayers, and perform his ablutions.

From the whole of this conversation, Simouftapha perceived with regret, that the amiable Setelpedour, as queen of the fairies, could not be agreeable to the great prophet. The love of religion struggled in his heart, with that which he felt for this queen.



The two consorts entered into the pavilion of Mahomet, where they found all kinds of fruit, which united beauty with the most exquisite flavour: When they had finished their repast, Simouftapha, leaving Ilsetilsone in conversation with the bird, returns to the palace, to give notice to the chief of the eunuchs, that he is to retire for six days into the pavilion in the garden with his spouse, during which time they should stand in need of nothing: A motive proceeding from devotion is always laudable; and the slave was far from suspecting that they had any other.

Simouftapha again joined his spouse near the tree; he wished to consult the bird about his journey.

He demands of it, whether he shall employ the genius of the box, or that of the ring?—"What is itself uncertain," answers the wise bird, "can exercise here no kind of power; and its greatest advantage would consist in your being a slave to it; but you have no occasion for succours of that nature. Take one of my feathers, it alone will carry you to Setelpedour; give it to my mate; it will remind her of me, and procure for her the means of returning hither. She must conceal it carefully in her tail: Every thing that comes from me will afford you a shade wherever you go.

What

What I give you appears a weak instrument ; but there is nothing useleſs in the hands of the Creator."

The divine bird ſpreads his beautiful tail ; a feather falls from it, which is transformed in an inſtant into a commodious and ſplendid chariot, in which the two conſorts place themſelves, and are conveyed to the ſteps of Setelpedour's throne. She comes down with all ſpeed to embrace them, and diſmiſſes her divan, with which ſhe had every reaſon to be diſcontented. The genii retire, caſting deſpiteful looks at the conſorts; the queen perceives it, and reſtrains in the mean time the anger which filled her breaſt.

"I would ſeat you on my throne, ſays ſhe to Simouſtapha and his ſpouſe, were I not afraid that you would be as little at your eaſe upon it as myſelf ; my ſubjects are meditating a revolt ; my attachment to you vexes them ; they aſcribe to this all the deciſions which proceed from my ſovereign will : If I hinder them from turning upſide down, by their outrages, the earth, over which they claim the command ; if my prudence prevents tempeſts and wars ; it is my love for Simouſtapha which hinders them from executing their ſchemes. I have cauſed Bahliſboul to be chained in the miſt of a deſart, and his ſpirit acts here in oppoſition to my authority. Theſe difficulties will not prevent you from be-

ing equally dear to me : I am going to rid myself of all the bonds which attach me to my subjects ; I will break them in pieces ; they have been sullied, and they ought to unite us no more. I long for the time which shall join me closely to you ; my heart has already learnt to shake off every other chain ; but you must assist me in humbling my proud heart. Come, and revive, by your tender and unaffected caresses, a soul fatigued by the disorders which surround it, and the conflicts which it experiences. I know that you come from *Casser-il-Harais*. The enchantments of this place are no compensation for the innocent amusements which you have forsaken : The companion of the bird which you saw entertains me perpetually with the astonishing wonders of the garden of *Casser-il-Harais*. From thence, says she to me, issued the flame of truth, which enlightens the world. It burns there still, under the most diversified emblems. O that I could depart with you this moment, and retire to that undisturbed asylum ! When I talk of happiness before my bird, the word *Casser-il-Harais* is always in its mouth : But it tells me that the garden can be opened to no female Mussulman, unless she is related to the vicar of God upon earth : It is not then enough that *Simouftapha* give me his hand ; if the generous *Isfetilsone* does

does not also espouse me, knowledge, happiness, and repose, are removed from me for ever.

Could I refuse to adopt you for my sister? says the princess: Your doubts rend my heart; you have won it; it belongs as much to you as to Simoustapha. How happy am I, in having the half of myself to bestow upon you, that I may feel how much the whole is indebted to your goodness!

"My dear friends!" replies Setelpedour, "every thing is going forward in our favour; but all is not over: I am still upon the throne. I have neither broken the wand which serves me for a sceptre, nor the talisman which I hold of my grandfather: It is here that I must resign my authority: It is here that I must trample my crown under foot: Whatever measures I shall resolve upon, my act, deprived of all the éclat which I must give it, would overwhelm me with confusion; I should be exposed to the danger of supplying the place of Bahlisboull upon the pillar, to which I have chained him, in the lower Thebais, and I should abandon myself to the vengeance of all my subjects."

"But, when I shall have accomplished this great design, who will carry me from this dangerous abode, and convey me to Casser-il-Harâis?"

"That

“That shall be my care,” said the princess, holding in her hand the beautiful feather: This is the chariot which conveyed us hither: This feather was intrusted to me by the mate of the bird, which must be about you, and which I have not yet seen.”

“It is indeed with me,” says the queen: “It is no less intelligent than the one you saw at Casfer-il-Harais, whose companion it shall always remain: I know not the reason of their separation. Their son, which I gave you, repaired to me after his disobedience; I amuse myself with his prating, which, though laconic, is constantly true: If he had been ignorant, he would not have resembled his family; but, although his knowledge extends to the past, the present, and the future, he knows nothing more than a word of every thing. His mother is come here, no doubt, to find him and instruct him; for she is continually talking to him. I observed their conversation, which I did not understand: They always ended with this answer, which signified that he did not comprehend her: *Nothing, nothing, nothing!* Hence it appears, that rebelling against wisdom may harden the understanding. The mother, at last, lost all patience: I made you a present of her son, for he was necessary to your designs: She was noways vexed at his absence. Since I felt the charm which at-

taches

taches me to you, I have wished for instruction, and have requested lessons from my divine bird."

"When you shall have a forehead less sparkling," said it to me; "and when I shall have my beautiful tail, we will speak of the sciences."

"Hence I concluded that my crown overawed her, and forced her to be silent; and, as to her tail, I had perceived that whenever she took wing, it did not end in a point like that of other birds; I found it deficient in gracefulness. The feather which you bring may be the one which is wanting; let us go and present it to her, and endeavour to make her speak."

It may well be supposed, that, notwithstanding this long conversation, the queen had furnished her guests with all necessary refreshments; there had been intervals; and all these things had been discussed in the hall of the divan, at table, and in the gardens, which had no more charms for Setelpedour: At last, the faint shades that precede the night announced its approach.

This is the moment which my bird prefers, says the queen; elsewhere it avoids the darkness; here the day is troublesome to it; but I begin to comprehend its motives. The cage of the bird is brought in, and Ilsetilsone advances.

My



My pretty charmer, says she to it, your husband hath given me this most beautiful feather, that I might restore it to you.—All hail to the daughter of the prophet! says the bird: All hail to the descendant of the ambassador of God! All hail to the heirs of the virtues of his representative on earth! The birds of heaven are bound to serve her, and my husband has done nothing but his duty. As a crown to a queen, so is his beautiful feather to me. Having said this, the bird takes hold of it in its bill, and fixes it in its tail, which immediately appeared longer and more sparkling.

Why are you not with your husband? says the princess.—Every one to his own affairs.—Will ours be soon accomplished?—Here are three of you.—Will you answer the queen to-day, if she desires to be instructed?—The half of your work only is done.—Whence comes our aid for the other half?—From above and below.—Will you inform me, my wife bird, about what I shall ask of you?—I owe you the truth which I know.—Your husband informed me when the sea was made, now at what time were the stars formed?—At the same period, to replace in heaven the number of the rebels who had been driven from thence.—What is that brilliant star which we see surrounded by ten smaller ones?—The largest

largest is Mahomet, the others are ten distinguished prophets.

Setelpedour, far from being offended at the answers of the bird, smiled with great complacency. Simouftapha remarked this, and made bold to offer the present he had brought, the scymitar of Kokopilefobe.

“ My dear prince,” says the queen to him, “ when I was mistress of my heart, and my hopes rested on myself, I would have given an empire to be possessed of the formidable weapon which you offer ; but now it is only in your hands that it can afford me security ; and it becomes of the highest value to me, as it insures your safety. Part not with it till times less troublesome than those with which we are threatened. O, my charming Ilsetilfone ! when shall we three know no other enchantments except those of love ?”

The lovers spent three days in the most agreeable overflowings of joy ; but these pleasant moments were disturbed by fears, the foundation of which was not imaginary.

Setelpedour, all powerful, because she reigned over the legions of Kokopilefobe, reigned, however, only in his name : Her conduct was contrary to the conventional laws established, and sanctioned by custom, in Ginnistan : No person could command there, till he was entirely

tirely subjected to Kokopilefobe or Bahlisboull : She had, by her own authority, raised to the command the Mussulman Benalab, who never had bowed under any yoke except that of God and his prophet : She reigned with such glory, in other respects ; she shone so conspicuously by her other great qualities ; that the genii, in their enthusiasm, by giving her the title of Star of the Seven Seas, compared her to the resplendent star of Mahomet ; they said in their pride, “ Kokopilefobe is the King of kings, and Setelpedour is his deputy.”

But the wise Benalab had used his power with discretion : She had not become enamoured of him ; she did not admit him to all her entertainments, to all the secrets of the court and state ; she did not make him her master ; but, in the mean time, sacrificing all for Simouftapha, she had done what was still more extraordinary.

She received a woman, whom she was not satisfied with treating as her equal, but whom she compelled on all occasions to sit on her right hand. And, that mortal beings might triumph with impunity, she had banished Bahlisboull and Asmonchar, and had loaded with chains the most powerful of the genii, Kokopilefobe alone excepted. These news had penetrated the deep caverns into which the proud sovereign

sovereign of the genii had been tumbled; every thing was ripe for a revolution.

Setelpedour was too watchful not to foresee and prevent it: She embraces the young couple, who were seized with terror at her project: "Depart," says she to them; "return to Casser-il-Harais; I will very soon join you for ever; but let Simoustapha be ready at the first signal to fly to my assistance; make use of the feather of the bird for your journey; and henceforth renounce all succours which depend on the power of Kokopilefobe.

Simoustapha and his spouse return to the garden of Casser-il-Harais, and wait with impatience the issue of these great events.

They restored the feather to the bird: "My wife has done her duty," says it to them; "my feather is always at your service; hold yourself in readiness, Simoustapha; you shall have occasion for it presently."

The queen of the genii had too much prudence not to lay the storm before it swelled to an excessive height. Already the old Bakkak and her nephew Jazzel, benumbed with terror on account of some indirect threats imprudently uttered against them, had fled to her for protection: Setelpedour sees that she has not a moment to lose.

The day after the consorts left her, she convoked a general council, and dispatched Jazzel upon another feather of the bird, with this billet for Simoustapha :

“ Dear prince, set out instantly in the same  
 “ carriage which I have sent you ; bring the  
 “ Koran and the sabre of your grandfather :  
 “ You may conjecture my scheme ; and my  
 “ conduct will fully explain it to you. Our  
 “ dear Ilsetilsone may wait for us near the tree  
 “ which she mentioned to me ; the wise bird  
 “ will not allow her to be overcome by ground-  
 “ less fears.”

Simoustapha had too noble a mind to hesitate a moment : He takes the divine book ; he arms himself with the formidable scymitar ; and, if the fairy-feather had not conveyed him so rapidly, he would have been able to arrive at Ginnistan on the wings of love.

The divan is assembled : Setelpedour ascends the throne : The restless genii eagerly observe her countenance, and are astonished at her firmness : She speaks in these terms :

“ I know that my conduct is blamed, and that plots are formed against me : It has been in my power openly to inflict very severe punishments ; but I disdain all black secrecy. If it appears humiliating to my subjects to obey my will, it is no less so to me to be subjected to

to laws, the wisdom of which I cannot perceive; and I had rather live the slave of truth, than reign by falsehood over corrupted subjects." Simouftapha then appeared, to the great astonishment of the assembly: She calls him, and places him by her side.

"Come and assist me," says she to him with a firmer tone, to hold the last council at which I wish ever to preside; and you, rebels! attend: I mean not to reproach you with rising against me; you have only followed the inclinations of your hearts; but, in order that I may forget your rebellions, abjure with me the power we hold of Kokopilefobe; let us renounce the crimes of my grandfather, and those which he made us commit upon the fatality of the lot which hurried us into them; and swear, as I do, upon the divine Koran, that you will be the slaves of God, and of his great prophet Mahomet!"

If the cloud which contains the thunder had burst in the midst of the divan, it would have produced less sensible effects than the unexpected discourse of Setelpedour: Terror suspends their speech; flaming sulphur issues from every quarter; and this infected odour filled the hall. On a sudden a frightful noise is heard: It is occasioned by the arrival of Bahlisboull,



who had been delivered from his chains by Kō-kopilefobe himself.

This formidable genius, covered with burning armour, of frightful stature, and hideous aspect, entered precipitately, and attempted to strike down Setelpedour with his lance of fire ; —Simoustapha draws his scymitar, and parries the fatal blow. The light which darted from the brilliant weapon of the Indian prince blinds in a moment his adversary, and his accomplices ; and they all appear thunderstruck.

Horrid darkness instantly overspreads Ginnistan : The sun had never enlightened that detestable country ; the light which had hitherto supplied it was the effect of a continual enchantment, the charm of which was in the crown which Setelpedour had just trampled under her feet.

Simoustapha and Setelpedour, with wary steps, traverse the darkness : They arrive at the apartment of the bird of paradise, whose sparkling head enlightened all around : Every time he moved it, or shook his wings, it emitted a new lustre.

“ Let us begone, my dear mistress,” says the pretty bird, “ all my feathers are at your service ; but take along with you the old Bakkak and her nephew ; they are both benumbed with fear : I know not who told them to take re-  
fuge

fuge under my cage ; but they have been well advised."

Bakbak and Jazzel had fallen into a swoon : They are tied on the fore part of the chariot, formed of the feathers of the bird ; and our lovers, delivered from every danger, set out for Caffer-il-Harais.

The fairy-feather which had transported Simoustapha goes off to inform Ilsetilsone : It accosts this young princess in the shape of a white pigeon ; perches on her shoulder, and says to her : " Madam, Simoustapha and Setelpedour are just arrived ; but you cannot receive the queen in the garden ; she is not yet permitted to enter it ; come and wait upon her in the great saloon of the palace."

The princess flies thither ; the bird follows : The three lovers embrace each other, their transports are boundless ; and the prospect of an union, which no obstacle shall be able to thwart, appears to raise them to the summit of happiness.

Another scene of gratitude passes upon a stand on which Simoustapha had laid the Koran : The two birds had both left their cage ; and, having endeavoured to get before each other, rested on the edges of the sacred book. When they had respectfully saluted it with their bill and their wings, they mutually ca-

ressed one another in the most affectionate manner.

On a sudden, the little bird which Setelpedour had given to the caliph's daughter, and which remained constantly in the castle, because it could not be admitted into the garden, runs up, and, without daring to rest on the Koran, waits till its parents invite it to approach. They assist it in mounting; they caress it; and the little animal cries out in its own language, as yet unfortunately too limited, "*True! True! Only true!*"

For the first time it was heard to utter two words successively. The curse pronounced upon it was taken off: Instructed by its parents, and become faithful like themselves, it was going to enjoy all the privileges of the birds of paradise. This little interesting scene agreeably arrested the attention of the lovers; but it was now time to converse about their personal concerns.

Setelpedour relates to Ifsetilsone the story of her abdication, and the valour of the hero who had defended her against the threats of the hideous Bahlisboul: The recollection of this scene gives new animation to her countenance; and she appears irradiated with glory.

Ifsetilsone wishes to persuade her new companion to partake with her in the pleasures of  
the

the garden of the palace. "My dear princess," replies Setelpedour, "neither you nor Simoustapha can of yourselves open the gates of that delightful abode; even the wife of Simoustapha cannot enter it, till the vicar of God upon earth, the great caliph Haroun-Alraschid, by adopting her for his daughter, shall allow her to be admitted to all its privileges. I owe to Simoustapha the happiness of being a Mussulman; to you it belongs to direct the means by which she, who was queen among idols, may attain that perfect conversion which shall render her for ever the slave of God, and the apostle of the destroyer of idols. I will meditate on the holy book from which I have hitherto turned away my eyes; the angelic voice of the birds of paradise shall be my interpreters. Go, and revisit parents whose happiness depends upon you; children, who stretch out their arms to embrace you; and who from you also must derive their happiness: Speak of me to the caliph; tell him that Setelpedour languishes, as a vine detached from the elm, till she become the spouse of Simoustapha; that the prince of the Indies can only espouse her who is publicly declared the daughter of the commander of the faithful; but in vain will she be adorned with this title, she will always

be

be inferior in virtue and in charms to the amiable Ilsetilsone.

“ Great queen,” answered the princess, “ I throw myself at your feet.”—“ I am no longer queen,” says Setelpedour, raising her; “ my throne from henceforth is in your heart, and in that of Simoustapha.” These declarations were sealed by the most tender caresses among the three lovers; and if they appeared to abate, the youngest of the birds cried, *Encore! Encore! Encore!*

At last Simoustapha and Ilsetilsone set out for Bagdad with the same retinue as before: They return to the palace, where they are anxious to entertain Haroun and Zobeida with the relation of the wonders they had seen, and the emotions they had felt.

The generous princess persuades her father to adopt Setelpedour for his daughter, in order that she may become the spouse of Simoustapha: To Zobeida her daughter’s conduct appears highly inconsiderate; she appears voluntarily to solicit a rival: “ Ah! Madam,” says Ilsetilsone to her, “ the woman who loves Simoustapha as I do, can never be my rival, she can only assist me in promoting his happiness.”

The caliph, better instructed than Zobeida, fully comprehends the reasons of his daughter; he had, besides, the highest esteem for the character

character of Setelpedour ; and every thing determines him to undertake a journey to Caffer-il-Harais, whenever the affairs of state shall permit.

In the mean time, Setelpedour begins a re-form which was necessary to enable her to embrace the law of the divine prophet : She endeavours to get herself instructed in new principles, of which she was ignorant : She curbs her proud imperious mind, already become generous and beneficent : She is in quest of a virtue more simple and more pure, which rejects every interested motive, which banishes self-love, the bane of society ; that virtue is charity : It extends to every object, and displays itself by every sort of means ; it often happens that we have no occasion to open our hand to give a great deal.

Setelpedour had withdrawn Bakbak and her nephew Jazzel from the wrath of the genii ; but what will become of them, strangers upon the earth, banished from Ginnistan, and thrust out of heaven ? She undertakes to put them under the same protection to which she had committed herself : The old woman observes the queen constantly employed in reading : “ Is it the Koran that you read, madam ?—Yes, Bakbak, and I wish you were able to read it also : Have you any desire to know the truth it contains,



contains, and, together with your nephew, to obey them?—No person loves the truth more than I do; I got myself a bad character by searching for it every where, and telling it morning and night: I never suffered my verity to be called in question. It is true, that, in what they call truth, a great deal may be said on both sides; but you have only to tell both sides of the matter; and, in that case, every thing is said.—Can you read, Bakbak?—Yes, madam, provided the writing be not too small.” She at the same time casts her eyes on the first page.

You must know, that at Ginnistan they departed very much from the original language: They spoke a sort of broken Arabic, and you may imagine that the dialect of the old woman was not very pure. Setelpedour condescended to make her spell all the letters of the first line: “There is one God only, and Mahomet is his prophet.”

When Bakbak had repeated these words a sufficient number of times, “Ah! that is pretty,” cried she, “they shall hear me speak; I will make a noise, I answer for it. Below, in the antichamber, there are two knaves, the genii of the box and of the ring, lazy drones, who are always sitting with their arms across, and have never laid a finger on a book: Ah! I will discourse

course to them about it.—Let us see ; we will laugh together.—*There is one*—Oh ! that's finely said.—*There is one God*,—that's well enough ! I will not leave them the whole day, till I have made them read with me." Setelpedour smiled at the odd zeal of the gnome, who immediately goes down to the antichamber.

" Come hither ! come hither, miscreants ! who love the demons only, because you are two of them ! Here's a book, which has been given me by our so great, so good, so sweet, and, at the same time, so formidable queen, that all the genii were astonished at her, and overwhelmed with darkness in broad day : See how it is written ! The pen was taken from the wing of an angel ! you could never have furnished the like, ye bats that ye are ! and that ink is made with a liquor from the eye of the raven which went first out of Noah's ark ; but all that is nothing ; you must read like me, word for word, what is written :—*There is only—There is one God, who is—one God only—and Mahomet is—only a prophet*. What have ye to say that, ye wretches ? You never did any good action, and you will continue in your old tricks ; yet you must consider what is to happen at last ; for, as the book says ; "*There is but one God, and one Mahomet, who are prophets*."

Jemal

Jemal, overwhelmed with his sad situation, and his want of employment, which was the consequence of the abdication of his sovereign, far from giving a direct answer, says to the old woman, You are much broke, Bakbak, since you came here, and you did very ill to forget your false teeth.

"I broke!" answered she, "what does that wry-faced spindle-shanks mean? It ill befits thee to speak of false teeth; every thing is false about thee, even thy face. Take care, for if I give thee one good curse, thou shalt again be changed into Ranfrack, and continue thy evil ways; but consider that thou oughtest one day to leave them off, because, "if God is a  
"God, Mahomet is his prophet." Bakbak carries back the book.

Well! says Setelpedour, have you wrought a conversion?—Oh! Madam, answers the old woman, one cannot make these rogues hear reason: In vain did I repeat, "that there is  
"but one prophet, and one Mahomet, who is  
"God."—Hold, Bakbak, you make the Koran rave: "There is one God only, and Mahomet is his prophet."

This conversation was interrupted by an interesting visit: It was the charming Simousta-pha mounted on his courser. He had left Bagdad in the morning, and nobody could follow

follow him; he finds Setelpedour with her book and her birds: She learns with a satisfaction, to which the blush on her cheek bears witness, that the caliph designs to acknowledge her as his daughter, Ilfetilsone as her sister, and both as the spouse of the bearer of such agreeable intelligence; in short, that Haroun would immediately come in person to consecrate an alliance which occasioned so much joy.

They interrogate the birds, to know if any thing would cross this marriage: The bird of Setelpedour answers, that every thing in Ginnistan favoured it; the bird of the tree said, that this success would make amends for its being so long deprived of its mate; and their child (which now spoke with great facility) declared, that a marriage which procured happiness to it must be fortunate: The lovers made them repeat a thousand times these presages.

It was at length necessary for Simoustapha to leave the castle of Casser-il-Harais; duty and love recal him to Bagdad, where he passes another month before the completion of the wishes of Setelpedour.

The desired event at last takes place: The caliph, his spouse, and their daughter, set out for the castle, in the midst of four thousand knights, and twenty thousand troopers, preceded by military instruments, and all the pomp

necessary for the design which was the object of their journey. The first morning they set out, Simoustapha separated himself from the cavalcade, to inform Setelpedour of the visit she was about to receive. This beautiful queen meets the carriages in the first court of the castle, and is obliged to receive the homage which she is unable to prevent. Her beauty astonishes the caliph, alarms Zobeida, captivates Ilsetilfone and Simoustapha, and is admired by the whole court of the commander of the faithful.

We shall not dwell upon the ceremonial of their magnificent reception; the expences were defrayed from the treasures of the caliph; and the fruits of the garden furnished all the delicacies. Neither shall we insist on the ceremonies of the mufti, and the delays of the lawyers: Nor even describe the pleasures of a marriage, which for the first time united three hearts to one another. We shall omit all reflections on the mutual happiness of the caliph's family, of the Indian prince, and at the castle of Caffer-il-Harais; for we have been so hurried on by the immense spaces which it was necessary to traverse, by the variety and the multitude of events, that we have lost sight of time, which ought to regulate all our details. Let us pursue objects on which it leaves so sensible

sible marks, that it is impossible for us to mistake its course.

The beard of Haroun-Alraschid was become infinitely more venerable; the same fire animates his looks; but deep wrinkles furrow his august brow. He had for ten years discontinued his nightly circuits in Bagdad, which was attended with so great advantages in detecting the conduct of his ministers, and watching over the happiness of the Mussulmans. But, while he perceives the angel of death advancing with too rapid strides towards him, he sees himself live anew in his most amiable offspring. His grandson Haroun-Ben-Alraschid joins to the age of ten years all the perfections which have attracted our admiration in the prince of the Indies and his spouse. Other descendants no less interesting comfort his old age. He sees himself revive by the fortunate birth of the son of his adopted daughter, a little Simoustapha as beautiful as his father.

But happiness is not the lot of every father; that of the Indian prince, far from partaking in the enjoyments of the caliph, thought himself unfortunate; and his spouse shared in his grief.

Twelve years had almost elapsed since they had seen a beloved son, who was their only hope. Happily for them, however, the rose-bush,



which was left them by Benalab, had not decayed. It flourished more and more, and grew every day more beautiful. They had comforted themselves with contemplating this shrub, the pledge of their son's prosperity, and were every moment in anxious expectation of seeing him again.

Simoustapha, in order to conceal his first projects, the success of which was extremely doubtful, endeavoured to keep them ignorant of his first adventures, from which he was unwilling to be diverted. When these had succeeded to his wishes, he delayed to inform them till next day; but, ashamed of a delay which appeared to him incapable of excuse, he continued in this reprehensible silence. How dangerous is it to delay till to-morrow!

Mean while an era arrived, when the silence of Simoustapha became extremely afflicting to his family. The moment that Setelpedour submitted to the law of the great prophet, and entirely abjured that of Kokopilefobe, all the enchantments which she had performed, and which had been performed in her name, were destroyed: The beautiful rose-bush of the Indian king withered; mourning and desolation reigned in the palace; and death was about to follow.

A bird, a messenger from the benevolent spirits, passed over Casser-il-Harais in its passage from India, and reported these things to the birds of paradise. That of the tree of the garden said to his mate, "Go, search into the apartment which is occupied by the princesses, and get for me a very small vial, which you must fill with river-water from the basin in the garden; and then tie it to my neck with a small ribband. I am going to India, and our son must accompany me; and if any one should ask where we are, you must say, that I have taken my son up to the tree for the purpose of instructing him." The good little female did as she was ordered.

The birds flew away with great rapidity: And the parents of Simousthapha, when they arose, found the rose-bush revived, and much more beautiful than ever. A new stalk shot up, which appeared to grow out of the first; and the two branches united again; so that it was impossible to determine which of them afforded nourishment to the beautiful flowers with which they were loaded.

The hopes of the king and queen of the Indies immediately revived at this prodigy; they sent for the astrologers, and required of them an explanation of the phenomenon of the sudden death and reanimation of the rose-bush. The

learned confidently affirmed, that the prince's life had been in the greatest danger, but that it had been happily protected; all the roses with which the bush was loaded were the virtues he had acquired, and the sciences by which he was adorned; for one virtue begets another; and these happy acquisitions were all connected. Such was the interpretation of the double stalk; it was impossible to know to which of all his excellent qualities the happy fruits which they produced were to be ascribed.

All these explanations, as clear as they appeared to be just, agreed perfectly with the first observation which had been made at the birth of the great prince Simoustapha, who was one day to become the accomplished pattern of the sovereigns of the earth. How consolatory was this mysterious emblem of the rose-bush! But, ah! how much did the reality exceed this figurative representation!

The Indian king and his spouse, wearied with sending messengers into the four quarters of the world in search of their son, without success, determined at length to go in quest of him themselves; and being now convinced that he existed in some part of the inhabited world, determined to undertake a voyage.

Should any one be disposed to censure the very extraordinary silence of Simoustapha towards

wards a family that ought to have been dear to him, and to complain of the obstinate destiny which thwarted every attempt to discover him; it may be remarked, that, if the Indian prince had discovered himself sooner, he would have been recalled into his father's kingdom at the time of his marriage with Ifetilsone; that Setelpedour, worthy of a better fate, would have continued the queen of the frightful Ginnistan; and that we are here led to admire that sovereign wisdom, which, by means of the blind conduct of mortals, accomplishes its important purposes.

Prosperity and happiness continued to reign at Bagdad and Casser-il-Harais: And the wise Zobeida, thinking her daughter much happier since she shared with Setelpedour the heart of Simoustapha, at length agreed, that, from a man's union with two wives, a very great advantage might result to all the three, provided one of the women had the gift of enchantment.

A rumour of war soon separated this charming party. They wrote from Bassora, that a numerous fleet threatened the coast with an invasion; and the caliph, presuming that the infidels were coming to revenge their defeat before Damascus, ordered levies to be made throughout the whole empire. Two hundred thousand

thousand men must march to the relief of Bassora, and the cities which may be attacked; of which army Simouftapha was to have the command.

The troops assembled, began their march, and soon arrived at Bassora; fortifications were erected on every place where the enemy could attempt a descent; the course of the fleet was watched; and the winds seemed to favour its approach to the land, and it might come to an anchor in the road of Bassora. The size of the vessels of which it was composed gave it a formidable appearance; yet it had not committed any act of hostility; the fishermen who were employed at a little distance from it had not been disturbed; and it was very clear, that it had not been fitted out by the infidels: At length it set up the Indian flag.

At this signal, the heart of Simouftapha was greatly moved: A boat left the largest of the ships, and rowed towards land. Simouftapha went on board one of his own, with the young Haroun, his son, and set off to meet the Indian boat. When they were within hearing, an Indian officer who was on board asked permission to land at Bassora; he told that the monarch of the Indies was on board one of the vessels, seeking every where for his son Simouftapha, and that, as he pursued his search, he wished to pay  
homage

homage to his friend and ally the caliph Haroun Alraschid; he told also that the spouse of the Indian king had embarked along with him.

Simoustapha endeavoured to restrain his tears of joy. "Return to the vessel," said he to the officer; "I will go on board your boat and accompany you." At the same time, he ordered his son instantly to get ready the caliph's boat, and cause it to be joined by all that were in the harbour; he then went into the Indian boat, and was carried to the ship from which it had come.

At this moment the Indian king was observing from the deck what passed in this interview betwixt the two boats. He had seen a mariner, in splendid armour, enter the boat which returned, and ordered people to be placed on the ladders to assist him coming on board, and he himself waited for him on the deck.

Simoustapha immediately threw himself at his father's feet, without being discovered by him, and bathed them with his tears. The monarch, astonished at that remarkable homage, in a strange country, raised the man who had thus prostrated himself. A flood of tears concealed from him features which were deeply engraved on his memory and his heart; but the voice of nature was heard; and his senses  
being



being weakened by the surprise, he reeled against the mast of the vessel, exclaiming, "It is my son!"

This declaration, and the accident which had happened, quickly brought the queen, who mingled her tears and embraces in the arms of her son and her husband; and they all three enjoyed the sweetest sensation of nature. These delightful feelings were kindled anew by the sight of the tender shoot, who soon after arrived. The young and charming Haroun, in complete armour, at the age of eleven, and uniting grace with innocence, was led on board by the most considerable knights in the Mahometan army, and found himself in the arms of parents whom Simoustapha had so often mentioned. The joy of this happy family will admit of no description. The Indian king landed at Bassora; the caliph was freed from uneasiness respecting the fleet; and the hope of seeing his ancient friend shed a gleam of joy over his declining days. These important news reached Casser-il-Harais, and happiness was communicated from the heart of the princesses to that of their children; even the birds appeared to partake of it; every thing shared in the general joy.

The caliph's army was disbanded, and that which accompanied the Indian king remained at Bassora;

fora. He himself marched to Bagdad, conducted by Simouftapha, who, attended by four thousand knights, and the caliph, came out to meet them with the most magnificent retinue; and these affectionate friends were again united.

Bagdad had assumed a new appearance, and the Indian monarch entered it under a long succession of triumphal arches. The caliph had displayed all his power to give a suitable reception to his friend and ally. The most splendid ceremonies were consecrated by the most solemn acts of religion, and were crowned by public rejoicings.

There yet remained to the king and queen of the Indies a very interesting journey. It was that to Caffer-il-Harais, where the two princesses, Simouftapha's wives, and their charming family resided.

The caliph immediately ordered preparations for this journey, which were in no respect inferior to those which Bagdad just beheld. The princesses had been informed of their intention; and the banner of the caliph and of the Indian king were even seen streaming in the air. Messengers had gone before the advanced guard; They at length arrived; and, in the transports of mutual affection, these two families felt the most agreeable emotions of Nature: The queen of the Indies then recognised all the flowers

ers of the first rose-bush, could never be satisfied with looking at them, and affectionately pressing them to her bosom.

After a magnificent repast, they entered the enchanted garden, where a feast, as ravishing as it was unexpected, awaited them.

By order of the three birds of paradise, all the rest were assembled, and formed a melodious concert; and, if they alighted for a moment on the grass, they presented to the eye a plot of an animated flower.

At this harmonious sound, the antelopes, and other little animals, appeared to frisk in measured time, and form a rural dance. The silver fishes left the sandy bottom of the basins in which they lay, and, with their varied scales, reflected the bright rays of the sun: The water appeared a liquid rainbow, whose different hues delighted the eye; and, if our lovers wandered in these delightful groves, it was only to share their transports, by talking of them.

But it was now time for the Indian king to impart to his subjects the happiness of his successful voyage. Simoustapha and his two spouses must go along with him; and, to compensate their loss, the caliph detained the young Haroun-Ben-Alraschid, whom he married to an only daughter of one of the sons whom the commander of the faithful had lost, and who,  
from

from that time, became the presumptive successor to his crown.

Simoustapha, Ilsetilsone, and Setelpedour, embarked with their family for India, and in tears took leave of the young Haroun. He attended his relations to the shore of the sea, and, after embracing them, "Raise an army," said he to his father; "I will ask one from the caliph, and, with these united, we will vanquish and bring back to ourselves all the infidels; I will have the pleasure of seeing you again, and will bring along with me my little Yalide; we will behold and embrace one another; I will caress my mother and my sisters, and we will all be happy."

The fleet had already left the sea of Bassora, and was in full sail for the Indian shores, where they arrived, after a prosperous voyage, and completed the happiness of the people. Setelpedour found there a happiness and peace, to which all the crowns of Ginnistan were not worthy to be compared; and Simoustapha received, at length, the reward of those virtues which the Persian philosopher had planted in his heart.

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SCHEHERAZADE having finished the history of Simoustapha, stopped for a moment. "Is this the whole history?"—It has interested me very

much, particularly on account of the birds. I am extremely sorry that they did not all three set out for India. They would have contributed, in a considerable degree, to preserve the peace of the family. Could I enjoy my wish, I would be vastly pleased to have one of these birds. You have (for I forgot nothing) told me of a fisherman, who wished to throw nets of silk into the water ; but I would willingly hunt these birds with nets of the seed of pearls.

“ This fancy would prove extremely dangerous, Oh ! my magnanimous sultan,” replied Scheherazade ; “ the birds of paradise are not taken in snares like these ; you might catch those of Ginnistan, which would appear to you equally beautiful, but which within, as well as without, are perfidious and false. As day is not yet near, I could relate to your highness a very tragical, and pretty short story, that would make you distrust any connection with these wonderful birds : It is that of Alibengiad, sultan of Hirkak.”—“ I will hear it with pleasure,” replied the sultan. And Scheherazade thus began :

*The History of Alibengiadi, Sultan of Hiraq, and of  
the false Birds of Paradise.*

ALIBENGIAD, sultan of Hiraq, and one of the descendants of Ali, was at war with the caliph Moavie. He thought to lay a snare for the caliph, by drawing him into a narrow pass, betwixt some heights, of which he had made himself master. Moavie made his army march slowly, and so as to make the enemy believe that he was under no suspicion of the stratagem they had employed against him. But Alibengiadi was soon defeated, his army cut in pieces, and he himself taken prisoner, and shut up in a fort upon the Aggiala, a few leagues distant from Casser-il-Harais.

This prisoner, a man of a ferocious disposition, had, during his reign, rendered many unhappy, and was now unable to bear his own misfortunes. He passed continually, from an unmanly dejection, to transports which bordered on madness.

His whole society was an eunuch, of fifteen years of age, who was shut up with him; and he passed his time in prattling with this young man, no less simple than ignorant. He expressed to him his astonishment, that a man like



Moavie, who spent his time in devotion, could suddenly adopt such measures, in every conflict, as disconcerted his enemies; and know beforehand their designs, without appearing to have examined them.

"Our caliph," said the eunuch, "has no need of so many spies, nor of so much attention. Whenever he is told that an enemy approaches, he mounts his camel, taking with him a supply of provisions; his bird of paradise goes before, and points out the weak parts of the enemy, their stratagems, and their resources."—What bird is that?" said Alibengiadi.  
"Have you never heard," replied the eunuch, "of the birds which are in the gardens of Casfer-il-Harais, not far from this? Mahomet brought a breed of them to this castle; they never go out but in the service of a prophet. They are often talked of at the palace; for the women have seen them. These birds are sacred; they are perfectly acquainted with the Koran, and speak very distinctly. They are said to do every thing. I have heard more than a hundred stories told of them, so that I have sometimes dreamed of them. But I never saw any of them, except in a dream. They are extremely beautiful. As they move through the air, one would think it was a parcel of silk flying, so fine and light is their plumage.

"Our

“ Our grand caliph hath certainly one of them, which serves and converses with him; but it is he only who sees and hears it; by which means he finds out every thing that happens in the palace. We have a negro among us, who gave out that he had one of them, which could find any thing that was lost. But his bird did not prevent him from drowning himself in the Ilfara.”

The sultan's head, already somewhat deranged, became still more so at the relation of these wonders, and many others, with which the eunuch constantly entertained him. “ If I could,” said he to himself, “ get a bird like Moavie's, it would facilitate my escape from this place; I would regain my provinces by its aid; I would raise an army, and engage the caliph; the balance of power would be maintained by forces natural and miraculous; and we should then see which of us two should be the conqueror. It is not far from this to Casseril-Harais; if my voice could reach that place I might determine one of the inhabitants of the garden to come to my relief.”—“ Come! come! come to me!” cried the sultan in his enthusiasm. “ Come, celestial and powerful birds! The throne of Hirak, and the most splendid empire I may be able to subdue, shall be your cage!”

Alibengiadi was so full of this idea, that he forgot his prayers both evening and morning. Though an infidel, he had hitherto been very punctual in that duty; but now he addressed his vows only to the wonderful birds; they alone occupied his thoughts.

"I have seen one of them to-night," said the eunuch to him one day; "I thought it spoke to me in my dream." "Ah! how happy art thou!" replied the sultan; "I would give half my blood to see them, though but in a dream."

During the night, this idea kept the sultan awake; which was not surely the way to have the dream he desired: But suddenly, at midnight, he heard a knocking at his window. It was an hundred and twenty feet from the ground on the outside. He looked; the window appeared to him enlightened as if it had been day. He examined with care all around, and saw a beautiful bird perched on the grating which was on the outside.

Alibengiadi was transported with joy and astonishment at this sight, and invited the bird to come in. "I cannot," replied the wonderful creature, but so distinctly, that he thought it was at his ear; "if, however, you are anxious to have me, we may agree upon terms." Having spoken these few words, the beautiful bird

bird disappeared, and Alibengiadi believed himself on the point of becoming the happiest of men.

The eunuch was asleep, and had seen nothing. The sultan communicated to him his good fortune; and the following night they were both on the watch; but they had only the pleasure of passing a sleepless night.

Several days elapsed in expectation, impatience, and want of sleep: At last, the bird appeared at midnight. "Of my own accord," said it to the sultan, "and attracted by the prayers which I heard from the bottom of a garden in Casser-il-Harais, I came to you. Now I have obtained permission to speak with you; do you wish that we should enter into terms?"

—"With all my heart," replied Alibengiadi.—  
"Arise then, and let me in."

The sultan arose: "Place yourself in the middle of the chamber," said the bird to him, "and repeat, along with me, word for word, what I am going to say. "Chamber! open: "I command you by Mahomet. Bird! Come "to me: I command you by the God of the "earth."

Alibengiadi, quite beside himself, pronounced these very words, and the bird alighted on his shoulder. Its splendour cast a vivid light through the room, and the terrified eunuch fell

fell prostrate on the ground.—“What do you want of me, and of the master to whom I belong,” said the bird?—“To get out from this place,” replied the sultan, “to return to Hirak, to reascend my throne, and to avenge myself on Moavie.”—“All that shall be done in time; but we must begin with our escape from this place. Order, by Mahomet, the iron grating which prevents our passage to fall down.” Alibengiadi obeyed without hesitation. “Command me, in the name of the great God of the earth, to make you a chariot which may carry you to Hirak before the close of day.” Alibengiadi, full of joy and hope, as he had already seen the grating of his casement disappear, gave this new order with pleasure.

“I leave you the cap of your turban,” said the bird, “but give me the muslin of it. This will be the materials of a chariot which will carry you and the eunuch.” The sultan eagerly complied with this request.

“Now,” said the bird, “I am going to set to work.” And taking hold of one end of the muslin with its bill, it carries the whole piece out at the window. A moment after, Alibengiadi perceived over against this window a very handsome chariot, in which the bird was yoked, with light ribbands of crimson and gold-coloured silk. He went boldly to the window, and  
stooped

stooped down to go out, and get into the chariot. "One moment," said the bird, putting a foot upon the chariot, "you will repeat the confession of faith which I shall dictate to you."—"Undoubtedly," replied the sultan, very eager to depart.—"If you fail in one word, you shall bathe for the last time in the river Aggiala: Mount now, and, before being seated, pronounce distinctly the following words: "In the name of the great Kokopile-sobe, the alone god of the world, I wish to get out from this place, and to go to Hirak."—"What do you say next, bird?" said Alibengiadi. "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

Scarcely had he finished these words, when the chariot was dissolved, and returned to its original muslin. The bird flew away, and the body of Alibengiadi, borne by this light stuff, was, by its own weight, dragged towards the earth. It fell among the rocks, which are bathed by the winding streams of the river; but was not dashed to pieces: Some of the wonderful virtues still remained in the muslin. Alibengiadi however was so stunned by the fall that he entirely lost the little reason that remained to him, and became quite silly. Some fishermen took him up, and carried him to Moavie.

The



The caliph, informed of the adventure by the young eunuch, who had not set his foot upon the chariot when it vanished, thought he discerned, in the punishment inflicted on the sultan of Hirak, the will of God and the intention of Mahomet. He granted liberty of body to him, whom a decree from on high had deprived of that of the mind.

The eunuch led him through Bagdad as a curiosity, and scraped together a little money, by showing him to strangers in the *kans*, as *the sultan of the bird*. Alibengiadi, entirely deprived of his senses, made no reply, but laughed at the different questions which were put to him.

“ARE you done,” said the sultan to Scheherazade; “your story is important, and much more so, by your having addressed yourself to me in more places than one. Do you think that *my head is somewhat deranged*, because I love birds?”—“Invincible sultan!” replied she, “I wished only to fortify you.”—“Come, come! that is enough; but be assured that I expect no one will ridicule my taste, and be more discreet in the choice of your stories.”—“*A propos*,” added the sultan, “I believe I recollect another of them; it is about two birds likewise, that were sent to the king of Egypt.”—“Your majesty,” said Scheherazade, “means to speak  
of

of a fact belonging to a very remote era, long before the Koran enlightened the world. I will relate it, as soon as your highness shall have ordered me."—"Speak then, I am all attention," said the sultan; "but remember!"—The amiable sultaneſs underſtood him at once, made a ſlight bow, and thus proceeded.

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*History of Sinkarib, and his two Vizirs.*

AT the time which I have juſt now mentioned to you, Sire, Sinkarib reigned in Nineveh and Thor, over the empire of Aſſyria. This prince was called to the throne at a very early age, and had many natural virtues; but a taſte for pleaſure made him neglect his affairs, which were ſo great a burden to him, that the miniſter who relieved him of it might promiſe himſelf an abſolute authority over him. Fortunately for this young monarch, he had the wiſdom to retain, in the ſtation of his firſt miniſter, the ſame vizir who, with equal ſplendour and wiſdom, had governed Aſſyria during the reign of his father. Hicar was his name. This man was the beſt informed of his time in all the known ſciences. His wiſdom, his firmneſs, the reſources of his mind, and the high reputation

tation he enjoyed, constituted the happiness of the people, and the safety of the realm.

Hicar was possessed of immense wealth; and his palace resembled an entire city. The desire of having heirs, more than a misplaced vanity, had induced him to marry sixty wives successively. He had built sixty Makfura\*, and allotted one to each of his wives as her own peculiar habitation; but no fruit of these marriages had yet appeared; and unfortunately he was more afflicted with this circumstance than became a man of so great wisdom.

Though Zefagnie, his first wife, had still maintained the empire she had acquired over his heart, yet she exhorted him to resignation in vain. "A child," would she say to him, "is not always a blessing from heaven. You know I had a sister, whom grief for a child brought in sorrow to the grave. Submit, my dear Hicar, to a decree, which, under the appearance of loading you with affliction, is perhaps in reality saving you from many sorrows." Hicar paid great deference to his spouse: She was Sinkarib's aunt, and had never boasted of her birth. Her conduct had been most amiable and prudent, and gave her a claim both upon his affection and his esteem. Ashamed of the  
step

\* A small detached palace, inhabited by a single woman, unknown to her rivals.

step he was about to take, he concealed from her his having sent for astrologers, to consult them respecting the means he should employ in order to have a son.

The astrologers, flattered with the confidence of a person of his rank, returned an answer immediately, and advised him to offer a sacrifice to Bilelsanam\*, from whom he must obtain the blessing he desired.

Hicar was a native of the country of Haram, and had brought from thence the knowledge of the true God; impelled, however, by an irresistible decree, he went to the high-priest of Bilelsanam, ordered a sacrifice, and consulted the oracle: But the oracle was silent, and the high-priest, seized with terror, persuaded the vizir to withdraw.

Scarcely was he without the temple, scarcely had he looked around on the wonders of nature, when remorse troubled his conscience, and he saw the offence he had committed, against the author of this astonishing work, in placing his confidence in a weak idol, and offering before it adoration and sacrifice: Impressed with these sentiments, he raised his eyes to heaven.

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“ Oh!

\* *Bilelsanam* is the oracle of Bel, the god of the Assyrians.

“ Oh ! sovereign Creator,” exclaimed he, “ Bilelsanam is silent, because he was formed to be so ; and will grant me nothing, because he has nothing to bestow ; but thou, who art possessed of almighty power, who hast hitherto withheld what I have so often asked, hear and answer this request, the last I shall ever dare to address to you—Grant me a son ! ”

After this invocation, the vizir, with downcast eyes, and his hands thrown across his breast, was endeavouring to recollect himself, when suddenly he heard a celestial voice : “ Hicar,” said it, “ leave off importuning heaven ; thou shalt not have a child ; but thou mayest adopt Nadan thy sister’s son, and make him thy heir.”

Hicar returned home ; and, without mentioning to Zefagnie the sacrifices he had offered to the idol, communicated to her the command which he thought he had received from heaven. The virtuous spouse yielded a chearful obedience to God and her husband ; and from that moment they adopted Nadan as their son, and united their cares and affection upon him, who seemed destined to them from on high.

Nature had lavished all her stores on Nadan ; he appeared diligent and studious ; he seemed to repay the kindness of Hicar and Zefagnie,  
and

and promised even to surpass their most sanguine hopes: He had a lively and penetrating genius; but all his talents and virtues were assumed; and such was his artifice, that whatever he affected to be appeared perfectly natural. With this dangerous defect of character, he joined a deep reserve; he was always cautious, and never off his guard.

"I should wish to find our child guilty of a fault," would Zefagnie say, "were it only to see in what manner he would extricate himself; for I really think him by far too perfect."

Nadan was now in his twenty-fifth year, adorned with much knowledge, and deeply skilled in the affairs of government and politics, in which his uncle took great pleasure to instruct him. Though secretly devoured by ambition, he never betrayed the smallest spark of it; and moderated all his passions so well, that it was never suspected any of them could gain an ascendant over him.

Hicar, deceived by these promising appearances, and wishing to spend the remainder of his days in repose and peace, determined to ask the king's permission to retire, and the appointment of his nephew Nadan to succeed him.

"Sire," said he to him, "it will soon be forty-seven years since I have had the honour



of devoting myself to the service of your illustrious father and your majesty. Old age is unavoidably accompanied with frailty; and I have no longer that activity which is necessary for the proper discharge of the office I still hold. For several years past, having foreseen that the time would come when my strength would be unable to second the efforts of my zeal, I adopted one of my sister's sons. I gave him such an education as would enable him to serve you with propriety. Happy natural talents have seconded all my views; and I flatter myself that I have formed a more able minister than myself. Sensible of the favours with which your majesty has honoured me, I will be always grateful for them; and, while I beg your permission to retire, you may still depend, Sire, upon my attachment for life. Yet I hope, with a grand vizir such as Nadan, you will stand in no need of my counsel; and that the abilities of which he is possessed will fully supply the place of my experience."

Sinkarib asked to see the person whom Hicar praised so much. No man was ever possessed of a more winning appearance than Nadan: He replied to such questions as the king thought proper to put to him with a seeming modesty, and, at the same time, with a soundness of judgment,

judgment, which discovered a maturity of knowledge that delighted the monarch.

"You this day," said he to Hicar, "complete the obligations I am already under to you, by the favour you have done me. I will crown your work, by calling Nadan to the office you wish to resign, and from which, with regret, I see you retire.

But I still wish you to be the first prince in my dominions, and to retain all the honours of the high station you abandon. You shall always have free access to my person; and my ear shall be always open to the wisdom of your advice.

In the mean time, the king ordered Hicar to be dressed in the finest robes, and a gold necklace to be given him, on which his name was engraved, and which was ornamented with the richest diamonds; and appointed a festival to be celebrated for eight days throughout all his dominions, in honour of his ancient vizir, and of the instalment of his successor.

The inkhorn \* and the seal were immediately delivered to Nadan; he received orders from the king for the management of business, and returned to the palace of Hicar.

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\* An ink-horn of a certain kind, is a mark of dignity, which is wore at the girdle.

“ My dear Nadan,” said his uncle, “ you will no longer have time to hear your mother’s advices or mine ; but forget not, I beseech you, those we have already given : It is by following them, that you have obtained the favour I have now procured for you. But I must inform you, that, in proportion to your elevation, you are exposed to danger ; and I request that you will still listen to a few advices, which till now would have been premature, but which at present are of the utmost importance.

“ You are about to be invested with great power : Employ it all for him who bestowed it on you. Remember that he is jealous of it.

“ Let respect prevent you from being familiar with your sovereign, and reserved with your inferiors. You have now no equal, and you can have no friend.

“ Be not the dupe of the court by which you will be surrounded. The tree that is loaded with fruit attracts the birds. They all flock to rejoice and wanton on its branches : But, as soon as it is stripped, it is forsaken, becomes the sport of the winds, and is covered with the dust.

“ Flattery will strew your way with flowers : Incense will smoke around you ; the sandal, the aloes, and the amber will burn : Learn to put a just value on such homage.

“ The

“ The man who shall praise you to your face is not the most dangerous: But be afraid of him who can inspire you with pride without appearing to admire you.

“ Your situation will draw around you the followers of fortune: Leave her her votaries; one day they will be forced to desert her.

“ Stand by yourself in the middle of a crowd; observe it well, but do not follow it.

“ After your business, retire into solitude; there you will find the most proper companion, reflection.

“ You will be possessed of abundance; but allow not yourself to use it to excess, for this spoils the taste.

“ A man is half dead who cannot live without superfluities. Pleasure, of every kind, dissipates and weakens the faculties of the mind.

“ Intemperance reduces men to a level with the brutes; he first becomes effeminate, and then absolutely silly.

“ Be always easy of access, but never be familiar; for it is necessary that your presence should command respect.

“ Shut the mouths of the talkative; they would speak till the sun had gone down, without saying any thing worthy of being heard; they are the foes of time.

“ Never

“ Never assume a haughty air; this is the mark of ignorance.

“ Listen with patience: Encourage the timid: Be not afraid of bold answers: If any one oppose you face to face, recollect yourself completely, that you may be able coolly to distinguish whether he is firm or obstinate.

“ Expect no good from such as are corrupted. When the river flows back to its source, when the water of the ocean ceases to be salt, when the crow becomes white, then have you something to hope from the wicked.

“ Be merciful. Man is often overcome by circumstances, and his own dispositions.

“ While you treat the guilty with rigour, soften even the expression of your looks; you are the organ of the law, not an executioner.

“ Give the poor a welcome reception: But banish from you the beggar, especially if he is dressed in fine cloaths; the wealth of the kingdom would not satisfy his covetousness.

“ Shun avarice; it always mistakes its own interest. Avoid prodigality; it sows with a full hand, and reaps nothing but vexation.

“ When the torrent is spent, the traveller passes dry-footed, and despises it. Even the earth which it hath refreshed thanks it not for the water which it spread.

“ Never

“ Never discover great eagerness but for the public good ; you yourself, and all the world, will profit by it in this case.

“ When you meditate an enterprize, keep your lips shut. When you intend to put it in execution, cover your shoes with a double coat of wool.

“ The secret which is divulged, burns the tongue. The rumour which goes before, or accompanies any project, is sure to disconcert it.

“ Spare the lives of men ; they are your brethren.

“ Shew yourself modest at first, you will afterwards shine with greater splendour.

“ Of all trees, the almond is the first which blossoms, and the last which bears fruit. Imitate the tree which produces its fruit before its foliage\*.

“ Foresee difficulties. The skiff which is launched into the sea may brave the first billow, but is swallowed up by those that succeed.”

Hicar, after having given these wise counsels to the young minister, presuming that he would be

\* There grows in Arabia a certain kind of tree, on which fruit is gathered, long before it puts forth its leaves.



be careful to follow them, and to tread in his steps, presented him to Zefagnie: They both embraced him, and loaded him with their prayers, and their blessing. The palace-gates were thrown open; and he received the usual compliments in the honourable office to which Sinkarib had raised him.

The first splendour of his new situation could not dazzle Nadan. This character, where vice had escaped the discernment of his uncle, was too deep to discover itself so suddenly. By the manner in which he received them, he showed himself worthy of the honours which were paid him; and went to the palace of Sinkarib to take his seat in the divan, surrounded by a court as splendid as it was numerous; appearing, even in the eyes of Hicar, deserving of the high station to which he had been destined by this respectable old man.

Sinkarib, sunk in effeminacy, stood in need of an active and enlightened minister, and found him in Nadan. The young vizir soon appeared superior to the one who had retired: He agreed to share his amusements; and did not appear an enemy to the pleasures which were within the palace. The monarch and his vizir soon became inseparable, and public business was at a stand.

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This produced complaints and murmurs which disturbed the tranquility of Hicar, and obliged him to signify his fears to his nephew. Nadan listened to him with respect, but with great coldness; he promised to make a complete reformation, but did not keep his word in one instance.

New disorders succeeded: The old vizir renewed his remonstrances, and became extremely importunate. He communicated his uneasiness to the king himself, but found him already prejudiced. Nadan had palliated the mischief in his view, and had begun to give a disadvantageous representation of his uncle.

“Old age,” said he to the king, “renders Hicar suspicious and timid: Although he does not now inspect affairs closely, yet he would still conduct them. Become feeble and languid, he can no longer retain his authority; yet he every day regrets its loss. His humour vexes me; and, were I to believe him, I should never be able to carry on any business to your majesty’s advantage.”

When Hicar appeared before Sinkarib, he soon perceived the effect of the prejudice against him with which the king had been inspired. The vizir met with a cold reception from the king; and, when he wished to speak of business, the monarch advised him to concern himself about

about nothing but his own health. I am perfectly acquainted with what you mean to say, added he, and can assure you that the complaints you have heard from discontented minds are absolutely without foundation. Nadan, your nephew, hath completely fulfilled my orders, and his own duty. Accept, however, of my thanks for these new proofs of your zeal, and, above all, endeavour to preserve your health, which now begins to become very delicate.

Hicar returned home, confounded and mortified. He threw himself, in tears, into the arms of his spouse. "My dear Zefagnie," said he, "this Nadan, whom we thought given us by the hand of God, to be our consolation, and the protector of Assyria, hath deprived me of the king's confidence: Every thing will be lost, and I shall be the cause of it!"

"Let us be comforted," replied Zefagnie. "Misted, like you, by specious appearances, I myself contributed to deceive you respecting him; but we cannot pretend that the divine goodness had any part in this: The voice, which seemed to come from above, did not descend from heaven; but it was permitted by God to deceive you, as you were coming out of the temple of Bilelsanam, whether you had repaired to force from the decrees of the eternal a posterity which you had been refused. Long have

I reflected on this unhappy circumstance; had it been the will of the Almighty to grant you an heir, this would have been equally easy to him as to strike your ears with an empty sound. As you have been punished by a piece of deceit for this act of idolatry, altogether unpardonable in a man so well informed; and you were constrained to adopt Nadan—Heaven grant he may stop here! The mask of hypocrisy, which has so long deceived us, may still conceal the most detestable plots.”

These reflections of Zefagnie were wise and profound; but Hicar, to whom his nephew was still dear, did not imagine that he would go so far as to verify the well founded presages of his spouse.

Nadan, already feeling remorse for his ingratitude, still endeavoured to hasten the ruin of his benefactor, whose looks and remonstrances he dreaded, whose fortune he was wasting, and whose reputation was a burden to him.

He founded the design of drawing up an anonymous libel against himself; but in such a manner that the style of his uncle might be recognised in its general strain. He filled it with false and bold imputations; every thing in it had a specious appearance, and seemed to have been dictated by zeal. The work was put into

Sinkarib's hands, and he communicated it to Nadan.

The artful minister destroyed in a moment the effect which his own imposture was calculated to produce. At the same time that he admitted the suspicion that Hicar alone was the author of it, he appeared melted into tears, and besought the king to pardon the weakness and age of his uncle; advising him, however, to take proper measures to remove him to a distance, as it was plain that he was not now what he had once been, and was become the sport and tool of a cabal.

"You allow him," added he, "a numerous guard; This appendage of greatness gives him an air of weight in the state, which encourages the discontented to flock around him, and to torment him by their groundless panics and visionary schemes: They persuade him to exert all his credit to regain his place; and he will never cease to trouble us till he shall have lost all hope of your favour."

"I could defy," replied Sinkarib, "the censure of the people, to whom I am not accountable for the reasons of my conduct, and I would enter into your views, were I not prevented by very powerful considerations; I would be afraid of mortifying Zefagnie, whom, as my father's sister, I am bound to respect; and, were

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it only on her account, I could not diminish the honours I have granted to her husband.

Nadan was too much a courtier not to approve the reasons of prudence alleged by the king ; but, being determined to prosecute his design, he found himself under the necessity of employing the most dangerous artifices.

The court of Assyria was treating with that of Persia about the exchange of two places in the frontiers ; and every thing was agreed upon : But Nadan alone had received this information. The messenger, however, must soon arrive and communicate it to the king.

Hicar received a letter, supposed to have come from Persia, from a man whose attachment to him was well known. He informed him that the sovereign of that country was not sincere in the negotiation ; and that, as soon as the troops should be introduced, and established in the place which the Assyrians were to give up, he intended to introduce others, by unknown subterraneous passages, into the fortrefs where those of Sinkarib should be lodged, and put them to the sword : The execution of this pretended project seemed to be put off until hostages should be mutually given and received.

Nothing was omitted in this detail, fabricated by Nadan himself, which could render this in-



formation plausible. Hicar was filled with indignant rage on hearing of such atrocity.

Nadan resided in the king's palace, from which he was but very rarely absent; he received a pressing invitation from his uncle to come immediately to speak to him; and he hastened thither with an air of the greatest eagerness.

"What has happened, uncle?" said he to him; "from the manner in which your orders were delivered, I was afraid I should be too late to hear your last groan! But I now feel myself easier, since I have the happiness to see you still enjoy such good health. On what so pressing business have you sent for me?"

"On your own," replied Hicar, "on that of Sinkarib and of all Assyria. Look at that writing."

Nadan being determined to provoke the old man still more by his behaviour than by his words, read the letter with a cold and disdainful air, and when he had finished, spoke to him thus:

"You ought now, my dear uncle, to aspire at nothing but repose; but it is much disturbed by your correspondence. I can answer for the wisdom of the measures I have taken with his majesty, and the fidelity of our agents. Deny all access to the discontented and turbulent who besiege you: The king, who is alarmed on your account,

account, will take your silence well ; and the affairs of the state would go on much better if you would once completely resign them to our management. After this insulting speech, Nadan bowed, and returned to the king's palace.

The virtuous Hicar, afflicted with what he had just heard, went to pour his sorrow and his tears into the bosom of Zefagnie. The princess, endeavouring to calm his grief, discovered that his distress was owing to the ingratitude and to the alienation of Nadan. This rash man, disdaining the wisdom of a salutary advice, was about to expose Assyria to war, to the loss of numbers of its subjects, and an humiliating slavery."

"Go to my nephew Sincharib", said Zefagnie, "carry the letter to him which you have received from Persia : Blinded as he is respecting the merit of Nadan, his own interests will open his eyes ; you must not suffer every thing to go to wreck, for want of so easy a step."

"I will do it," said Hicar, "notwithstanding the inward repugnance I feel." At the same time, he went to the King's palace, and demanded a private audience.

"I will grant you it," replied Sinkarib, in presence of Nadan, who hath already acquainted me with the subject of your uneasiness. You allow yourself to be tormented by false advices ;

fortunately they do not alarm me in the same manner. A message from my ambassador in Persia is this moment arrived, and brings me the most agreeable intelligence. The subterraneous passage spoken of to you is a mere dream; and the supposed treachery of the king my brother a criminal invention, for which your correspondent would infallibly have been punished, did not his death, which has been just announced by a messenger, render it impossible. I wish this may be the lot of all those who endeavour to render you uneasy respecting the present government, which all Assyria, except yourself, approve of. Return to your palace; live there in tranquility: It is all I ought to expect or require of you.

Thus, without regard to his age and past services, was Hicar dismissed with neglect. He returned to his virtuous spouse, and gave her an account of the cold reception with which he had met.

The star of Nadar is fatal indeed to you, said she; it corrupts your benefactors and your friends, and even poisons my advices. Unfortunately it rules over Assyria, which appears to me exposed to the greatest danger. But if, by the desire of heaven, this country is doomed to fall under its present administration, why should we alarm ourselves with its destiny, since the  
grandees

grandees of the state take no measures to prevent it? Let us be resigned, and leave others, either to shut their eyes against the dangers which threaten the state, or to adopt such measures as may prevent them. Sinkarib orders you to seek repose; and, in my opinion, this command is the easiest of all to be obeyed, especially at your advanced age. You love the sciences; attend to them, and forget at length that there are such beings as vizirs and kings. Hicar prepared himself to follow the advice of Zefagnie; and, that he might occasion no more uneasiness to Sinkarib, nor jealousy to Nadan, he shut his door against all such as might be suspected of speaking to him upon public business, and restricted his intercourse to the learned of different countries, with whom he had always maintained a correspondence. The cheerfulness and equality of his temper rendered his family happy. He lived in comfort and tranquility; and was beginning even to forget his nephew; when Nadan, to whom the existence of this illustrious man was an insupportable burden, conceived the danger of freeing himself from it by the most criminal intrigue.

After Hicar had retired from the palace, Sinkarib felt himself uneasy at the manner in which he had treated him, especially when he recollected the important services he had rendered  
the

the state. The fight of this respectable old man struggled in his heart against the insinuations of Nadan : But a look from the minister easily triumphed over the natural dispositions of his master, whom it was as easy to govern as it was to gain his confidence : Nevertheless, the king of Nineveh was dissatisfied with himself.

Remorse pressed upon him for several days ; till at length, his situation becoming painful, he thus spoke to Nadan : “ We sent away your uncle very ill pleased. How has he taken the reception I gave him ? What is he doing now ? ”

“ With sufficient haughtiness,” replied Nadan, “ and a great deal of ill humour, he hath shut himself up, and allows no person to come near him. But, although he is inaccessible to the inhabitants of Nineveh, he hath not given up all intercourse with strangers. Couriers arrive every day from Persia and Egypt.” And what can be their intentions ? replied Sinkarib, with uneasiness.

As he is again seized with a strong desire of conducting public affairs, I cannot conjecture what methods it may lead him to employ in order to gain its end : It is a rage in the old man, which to me appears altogether inconceivable ; but it would be very easy for your majesty to clear up this subject. I will give you notice of the departure of one of his principal messengers ; you will cause him be stopped, and the nature of the dispatches

patches will explain the import of the message.—I approve of your project in part ; but it would be better that the courier should appear to have been robbed, that we may not seem unreasonably suspicious.—It is wisely thought of in your majesty ; it is possible that the letters of a man of his age may contain nothing but idle dreams ; and, in that case, by having stopped them, you would show yourself suspicious without any cause.

Nadan well knew the nature of his uncle's correspondence. He wrote to Persia to one of the magi his friend, to Egypt to a certain priest of Osiris, upon points of science, respecting which he was anxious to get information ; but a correspondence of a very different nature was to be imputed to him. What measures did the perfidious minister take ? By means of his uncle's seal, which he had got into his possession, and of the ease with which he counterfeited his handwriting, he wrote a letter in his name to Akis king of Persia, Sinkarib's greatest enemy. He invited this monarch to come and take possession of a kingdom, which was harrassed by an effeminate tyrant, now become the object of the hatred and contempt of the people. He advised him to appear at the head of a chosen body, and repair to the plain of Nerrim, where he himself would meet him with his guard about the



the first of the month Niram. He informed Akis (all in Hicar's name), that one of the principal gates of the city would be delivered up to him, and that he would find the grandees and the whole nation ready to throw off the tyrant's yoke, and transfer the crown to him.

This letter supposed that the king of Persia must have received others, in which Hicar explained to him the springs he had set in motion to bring about the rebellion.

When Nadan had shaded his imposture with all the colouring of truth, he got a bag made, resembling that in which the messengers of Hicar shut up their master's letters, and which was fixed to their girdle. He was previously informed of the departure of one of them, and made a trusty man lie in wait for him without the gates of Nineveh, who, entering into conversation, prevailed upon him to refresh himself in the first tavern at which they should arrive; from which the messenger did not come till after the other had taken away the bag that he carried, and put Nadan's in its place.

The minister then went to the king. "Sire," said he, "my uncle's courier set out this morning for Persia: Cause the robbers be suborned, and appointed to their station. As for myself, whatever be my uncle's dispositions towards me, yet the ancient obligations which I am under to  
him,

him, and the ties of blood, render it impossible for me to take any steps in this business. You yourself must pursue for justice, if you find it your duty ; but, on this occasion, it is impossible for me to be of any service to you.—Sinkarib approved of Nadan's delicacy ; and sent five of his guards, in disguise, in pursuit of the courier, whom they soon got up with and recognised by the bag which hung from his girdle. They attacked, plundered, and left him on the road, as robbers would have done, whose part they acted extremely well.

No sooner had Sinkarib read the contents of the letter than he became quite furious. He ordered an immediate search to be made for the courier, who had retired into a cottage near the place where he had been attacked. The king's messengers immediately laid hold of him, and conducted him to the king.

“ To whom do you belong, slave”, said the monarch.—“ To Hicar.”—Did he deliver this letter to you ?—Yes Sire.—To whom was you to deliver the packets which you carried ? To his friends in Persia.

“ Oh ! Treason exclaimed the king ! The man whom my father and I have loaded with favours would betray me to my enemy, and totally ruin my kingdom. Let Hicar be sought for and brought hither ! The guard hastened

to

to Hicar's palace ; but at that time he was at a small solitude, to which he frequently retired, among the mountains at a little distance from the city.

Zefagnie, alarmed at so quick a pursuit, and having learned that her husband was accused of high treason, raised her hands to heaven imploring its assistance ; and, while a party of the guard was dispatched to seize Hicar in his solitude, she ran to the palace of the king, his nephew, to throw herself at his feet. Sinkarib raised her up. He can obtain no favour, madam, said the furious king to her ; I am in possession of all the evidence of this shocking conspiracy of your husband against me and all Assyria. The blood which flows in your veins must render this criminal as odious, in your eyes, as he is ungrateful.

Zefagnie then entered into the detail of the charges laid against Hicar ; she saw the pretended proofs of them ; but, at the same time, she was conscious of his innocence, and Nadan's guilt, who only could have counterfeited the handwriting and the seal which were before her. But the eyes of the king were too much fascinated to allow her to entertain the hope of being able to tear off the veil which covered them.

“ Sire, said she, if you think it your duty  
to

to sacrifice my husband to your revenge and safety, I have only one favour to ask. Whether he is guilty or innocent, his blood to me is precious, and I wish to collect even its last drop. He had built a tomb, in which we were one day to be united: Grant me your permission there to deposit his ashes; and, while I deplore the loss of a man to whom your father united me, I will applaud your justice, provided his death is necessary to your safety and that of the state. Only give orders that the sacrifice be made in his own palace.

Sinkarib could not refuse the request of Zefagnie, and ordered the proper officers to repair immediatly to Hicar's palace, and bring him the head of this respectable old man.

Zefagnie, on her return home, dreading the immediate arrival of Hicar and his executioners, endeavoured to overcome her grief, and to preserve, amidst a crowd of people, that recollection of mind of which she intended to deprive them. She prepared tables, covered with every dish which could awaken the sensual appetite; the most exquisite liquors were set upon the sideboards; pots were filled with perfumes; flowers of every sort embalmed the air; the palace was decorated with every ornament; and sixty of the most beautiful slaves were prepared for this service. It was amidst these magnificent  
Vol. II. Y preparations

preparations that Zefagnie proposed to receive the officers of Sinkarib. And, as soon as the snare into which she wished them to fall was properly laid, she repaired to the gates of the palace, in order to wait for them.

They at length arrived. "I know for what purpose you are come, said she; you are the ministers of the king my nephew's pleasure. But, before you execute a decree, so severe to me, I wish to express to him, as well as to you, the grateful sense I have of the small favour he has granted me, in not exposing my husband to a cruel and ignominious death. Enter my house.—Those who are to bring the unhappy Hicar here are not yet arrived. My slaves have orders to wait upon you. My present situation does not permit me to do this myself.

The officers, after thanking Zefagnie, and accepting her invitation, entered the apartment. They seated themselves on sofas; an hundred beautiful hands displayed an eagerness to serve them; and in the pleasures of the table they soon forgot the rigorous orders with which they were entrusted.

Meanwhile Zefagnie lost not a moment; she took aside the executioner. "Yapousmek," said she, "do you remember that when king Serkadoum, my brother, Sinkarib's father, intended to put you to death, I contrived to screen you

you from his anger? Do you recollect that at that time you were indebted for your pardon to the very man whose life you are about to take?"

—Yes, madam, and I shall never forget it.—

Very well, continued Zefagnie, this is the moment to discover your gratitude: Hicar is innocent; and you would not wish to embrue your hands in the blood of a virtuous and beneficent man. I have taken, from the subterraneous prison of my palace, an old slave, a magician, stained with the greatest crimes, who has the very air and figure of Hicar. Your superiors at this moment are incapable of observing you; the magician is already dressed as my husband must be. As soon as Hicar shall appear, you will receive him from the hands of those that bring him; you will load him with the chains you have brought; and there is a red handkerchief which you will put upon his eyes; you will then lead him into the hall, where I shall be to receive his last farewell: But you must remove indiscreet people, under the pretence of respecting the last interview of a husband and wife. A moment after this I will deliver to you my slave, dressed, in chains, and his eyes covered with a handkerchief of the very same pattern with that you shall have upon Hicar's: You will then give the signal for execution, and

Y 2

strike



strike off the head of the magician, which you will carry to the palace of the king.---

"May God prosper your designs!" replied Yapoufnek. Willingly would I hazard my life, in order to save his who is so dear to you."

Heaven will reward you, said Zefagnie, and, on our part, all the riches we possess shall be at your disposal; you shall want nothing.

Scarcely was this plot concerted betwixt them, when the arrival of Hicar enabled them to put it in execution, without experiencing the smallest difficulty. The magician slave was on his knees, and recognized as the vizir himself by the guards who had brought him: The officer of Sinkarib, who had the charge of giving him an account of the execution of his orders, was informed; he approached; and that very instant the head of the slave was struck off: Yapoufnek took it up, and carried it to the king.

Sinkarib's officers tore themselves with great reluctance from the pleasures which the artful Zefagnie had given them to enjoy; but they must of necessity return to their duty; and Hicar's spouse, having made the doors of her palace be shut, was left at liberty to devote herself to the cares to which it was now necessary for her to attend.

She ordered the body of the magician to be carried

carried away with the usual ceremonies, and carried, in its robes, to the tomb prepared for Hicar, attended by all her household in mourning.

As soon as it was night, with the assistance of the jailor of the prison of her own palace, she conducted Hicar into the cell from which the old magician had been taken; she made it be put into the most commodious order; and this dismal habitation became, in the eyes of Zefagnie, a most delightful palace, since it had rescued innocence from the rage of envy.

During this bloody scene, the hypocritical Nadan, affecting a grief which he did not feel, had shut himself up in his apartment. Sinkarib found it necessary to bring him out of it. "Be comforted, Nadan," said he to him; "we were disturbed by your uncle, and his humour rendered him very dangerous. His whole fortune will belong to you at his widow's death; and you will soon enjoy it; for she cannot long survive the loss she has sustained." Nadan left his apartment with the king; and they both haste to drown, in the stream of pleasure, the remorse, uneasiness, and torment, with which they were secretly distressed; and became still more negligent of their duty, and the welfare of Assyria.

Meanwhile, the death of Hicar had occasioned

ed the utmost grief in Nineveh ; and soon spread a general mourning throughout every province of the empire. The neighbouring powers having received this intelligence, could not conceive what should have determined Sinkarib to extinguish the luminary of Asia, whose light was the firmest support of his power. His enemies triumphed, and sought only for a pretext to invade Assyria.

Pharoah, king of Egypt, thought this conjuncture too favourable not to take advantage of it ; and sent an envoy, with almost no retinue, to Nineveh, with the following letter to Sinkarib.

*"Pharaoh, Sovereign of the Sovereign of the Rivers of the Earth, who fills the basins of the sea with the immense volume of waters which he discharges by seven mouths, to SINKARIB King of Assyria."*

Let the man who knows not how to govern, resign the command.

" We wish to dignify the yoke of humanity, and to reign by our wisdom throughout all the earth. Descend from your throne ! and come, with your grandees and people, to meet the chains, which my armies, that  
" will

“ will cover your sands, shall bring with them.  
“ Wait not in your palace till you meet de-  
“ struction and death. You may, however,  
“ have it in your power to treat with me as  
“ with a brother; and these are the condi-  
“ tions:

“ I have profound questions to propose;  
“ and you must send me a man who shall be  
“ capable of resolving them. You must build  
“ me a palace between heaven and earth,  
“ whose foundation shall rest on nothing, and  
“ whose roof shall be fixed to nothing: They  
“ are only superior men whom I seek to ho-  
“ nour. If you can fulfil these conditions,  
“ you shall receive, for four years, a tenth part  
“ of the revenues of Egypt. But, if the man  
“ whom you send should be baffled, if he fails  
“ in the smallest article I exact, then you may  
“ expect a treatment as much more rigorous  
“ as I shall have cause to complain either of  
“ your disobedience or of your presumption.”

Sinkarib, astonished at this letter, shewed it to Nadan: “ By what means,” said he, “ shall I be able to avert the storm which threatens my kingdom? Summon all the astrologers, the learned men, and the sages of my empire; assemble with them all the architects; and let us learn from them, if by any enchantment it is possible

possible to construct this imaginary palace which Pharaoh requires of me; and see if there be any one who flatters himself that he will be able to answer the subtle questions of the Egyptian king."

The calling together so extraordinary an assembly produced universal astonishment. Pharaoh's letter was circulated throughout Nineveh; and a copy of it even reached Zefagnie. As soon as it was night, she repaired, as usual, to her beloved Hicar, and communicated to him the contents of the letter, by which all the people were agitated. Hicar, after reading it with attention, inquired at his spouse what effect it had produced upon her.

It appears to me, replied she, like a cloud filled with wind, which is easily scattered. Were my Hicar alive to the rest of the world, I should look upon these mysteries of the Egyptian king as idle fancies; and I have already conceived a plan of the castle which should be built for him: I would rather wish, however, that he should make war upon us with such letters, than hear of his armies being upon the frontiers of the country.

While this happy pair were happy in the enjoyment which they procured to one another, and conversing in tranquility concerning the threatenings of the Egyptian king, all  
Nineveh

Nineveh was in motion to make up a council, which should form an answer to them. If a man passed in the streets with a downcast head, a fixed eye, and a thoughtful air, the officers of Sinkarib pulled the muser by the sleeve: "Make haste," said they, "you are certainly a learned man, and are waited for in the council." This was addressed to the people of every rank, and frequently to those who were not expecting it.

At length the council was assembled. The well-informed had absented themselves, that they might not be reduced to the mortification of confessing their ignorance.

The king caused the dispatches of the Egyptian monarch be read, after which all with one voice exclaimed,

"Hicar alone could have fulfilled the conditions of Pharaoh! They would be attempted by any one else in vain."

"Alas!" said Sinkarib to himself, sighing deeply, "Where art thou, Hicar? Gnawing remorse perpetually sets your innocence before me, in spite of the apparent guilt which condemned thee. Where could I find another sage to extricate me from this dreadful labyrinth in which I am bewildered?"

The unhappy sovereign dismissed the council, which, without suggesting any measures for



for his relief, added greatly to his regret. He did not now seek for Nadan to give him confidence by his advice, or to dissipate his cares in pleasure. To the palace of his aunt Zefagnie he bore his inquietude and sorrow, and bewailed with her the man to whom they had been dear.

The wise spouse of Hicar loved the king; who, enervated as he was by the pursuits of pleasure, was endowed with an excellent natural disposition, and whose soul, the influence of his court, corrupted as it was, had not yet rendered cruel: He threw himself at her feet, with eyes bathed in tears; and she took him in her arms: "Come, my dear nephew," said she to him, "I share in your affliction; the king of Egypt threatens you; but you must not suffer yourself to be discouraged. He who is able to inflict a blow does not begin by threats: In challenging your wisdom and knowledge, he leads me to suspect his own. You are the sovereign of a powerful empire; examine your forces, draw them out, and advance towards the frontiers before they are attacked.

"Alas! madam," said Sinkarib, "the threats of the Egyptian king are not the only causes of my affliction: I am deprived of Hicar, whose sense, counsels, and knowledge, constituted all my strength. What king on earth would have  
dared

dared to insult me, had he been still alive? Convinced, from the bottom of my heart, that this illustrious man fell a victim to a detestable intrigue, I am afraid to examine its springs too nearly, and to discover its authors. The cry of the nation awakens the remorse of my conscience. I assembled a council to devise the means of answering the propositions of Pharoah, and I was openly told, that, by putting Hicar to death, I had deprived myself of every resource. Alas! who can restore me the man whom I have treated so barbarously! Lead me to his tomb, that I may embrace and water with my tears the precious relics of this wise minister. I will ask advice at his cold remains. Around them the soul of the man who directed my youth doubtless wanders; and I may yet hope to receive that counsel, which all the pretended sages of my court are unable to give.

Zefagnie, that she might learn the nature of his sorrow, did not interrupt the king. And, when she was convinced that it was not the fear alone of an inevitable war, that occasioned his distress, but that a real sensibility was the principal cause of it, she thus spoke:

“My unfortunate husband, incapable of treason in any shape, certainly sunk under the odious plot of a mean jealousy. But the enemies who attacked his reputation without success,  
have

have not been more fortunate in their attempt to take away his life. Divine Providence hath rescued it from their fury, and saved his head from the mortal blow with which it was threatened."

Hicar lives ! exclaimed Sinkarib, in a transport of joy. Ah ! my heart is relieved ! Heaven hath saved me from the remorse of guilt, and hath reserved for me an infallible resource against the vain efforts and stratagems of Pharoah ! But how has this miracle been performed ? Where shall I find this venerable sage ? And, alas ! how shall I bear his looks, after my black ingratitude towards him ? Will the shame with which I am covered be a sufficient atonement for my crime ?

Keep yourself calm for a moment, replied Zefagnie ; I will see if it is possible to bring him hither ; Dread not his presence : Heaven, in protecting his life, has also preserved his virtues ; nay, it has even crowned them, by granting him patience in adversity, which he had never known before.

She then went to inform Hicar of the happy revolution which had taken place in the heart of Sinkarib ; it affected the old man very deeply ; and she then told him, that she had concealed the service done them by Yapoufmeek. " Right or wrong," said she, " sovereigns will be

be obeyed; and Sinkarib, although indebted for his repose to the disobedience of his slave, would not, perhaps, pardon the transgression of his orders. Let us suffer the idea of the miracle to remain, without corroborating it any farther: The king may, perhaps, look upon your safety as a peculiar blessing from Bilefanim."

Hicar prepared to go to Sinkarib. The consolations he had drawn from the heart of Zefagnie, those he derived from his own reflections, the ease he enjoyed in the dungeon where he lived, and the use of elixirs, which had supported both his body and his mind; all these together seemed to have renewed the age of this old man. He at length came out from his retreat, and appeared in the presence of his sovereign.

Sinkarib immediately threw himself into his arms, and with difficulty restrained his joy. "Be calm, prince," said Hicar; "it is essentially necessary to your interest that my being alive should not be known. I know on what terms you are with the king of Egypt; he would attribute to me all the springs which we are about to set in motion; and, presuming too much on your resources, he would employ against you still more dangerous means. If your court, if Nadan himself were informed of my

being alive, the Egyptian envoy would be made acquainted with it. You must not, then, Sire, give any person the smallest hint of the secret you have now learned: Besides you have no need to be uneasy about the propositions of Pharoah; I have already noted down, in the silence of my retreat, the answer which you must return; and, under a feigned name, I will fulfil the engagements you are about to come under: Here they are:

SINKARIB, *king of Assyria*, to PHAROAH, *king of Egypt*.

The man whom a wonder astonishes will never perform one.

“ Your letter, brother, hath filled me with  
 “ admiration at the extent and depth of the  
 “ knowledge which it announces, and the re-  
 “ spect which it shows you have for the human  
 “ race. I have the honour to be of your  
 “ opinion, that the power which subdues men  
 “ also degrades them; and that they were born  
 “ to be governed by wisdom and knowledge.  
 “ Many learned men of my court are contend-  
 “ ing for the honour of being admitted to a  
 “ nearer view of your surprising knowledge,  
 “ and of trying their weak abilities in the ex-  
 “ planation

“ planation of the difficulties, which you are to  
“ propose. The architects, who must build  
“ your palace, are here ; but it is necessary that  
“ they collect workmen, who may be able to  
“ execute their orders ; and this requires a de-  
“ lay of three months. I am sensible of the  
“ importance this delay will occasion you.

“ All that you have to do is to find people  
“ to supply them with materials : In all other re-  
“ spects I accept your terms, and am ready both  
“ to give and to receive hostages, unless my  
“ word shall be sufficient, as I rely with entire  
“ confidence in your’s.”

Sinkarib was greatly astonished at the contents of this letter. “ I know well,” said he to Hicar, “ that you can answer all Pharoah’s questions. But, supposing you to be the architect of this palace in the air, Where could you find, in three months, workmen to labour under your orders, unless the genii of the air should build it ?”

“ My wife,” replied Hicar, “ has undertaken the construction of this whimsical edifice : She intends to render it impossible for Pharoah to fulfil the conditions to which he is bound by the letter you are about to send him. Zefagnie looks upon this aerial palace as an infant’s play-thing, which must be destroyed by the artifice of a woman : It belongs to her to contrive



it: She will give me some directions for its execution. Return to your palace, Sire; dispatch the Egyptian ambassadors. I will shut myself up in my solitude, where, under the name of Abicam, a Chaldean astrologer, and protected by Zefagnie, I intend to live unknown to all the world, and occupied with your affairs. If any embarrassment should occur in them, you can easily make me acquainted with it. But I have one advice to give you.

He who plotted my death is as much your enemy as mine. Be upon your guard: You need not be afraid of any blame on this account, since the pretensions of the Egyptian king furnish you the most plausible pretext. Double your guard, and take mine, which you left from respect to the princess your aunt. The chief who commands them is beyond the reach of corruption; and all his officers are of his own choice. Honour him with your confidence; and this will be one barrier more between you and every enemy.

Hicar seemed to have foreseen the designs of Nadan. This ungrateful minister, perceiving that the king's going so frequently to Zefagnie must necessarily complete his ruin, had formed the design of bribing Sinkarib's guards, of sending his head to the Egyptian king, and of be-

coming

coming his successor on the Assyrian throne, as a tributary of Pharoah.

Sinkarib showed him the letter he meant to address to the king of Egypt. Nadan, although its contents astonished him, looked upon it only as a contrivance to gain time.—“Your majesty,” said he to the king, “knows very well that you cannot fulfil the conditions it imposes, and probably you avail yourself of this delay to make preparations for war?—Yes, replied Sinkarib; and I will employ every possible method to enable me to prosecute my design, at the head of fifty thousand chariots; but we must wait the departure of the Egyptian messengers, that we may not create in them any suspicion. In the mean time, notwithstanding their presence, and without being in the least suspected, I can withdraw the guard from Zefagnie, in order to inure them to exercise, and to prepare them for accompanying me to the war.

Nadan thought he had now found out the motive which led the king so frequently to the widow of Hicar, and became less suspicious of this circumstance: Without this, the increase of his guard, and the inclination which appeared in Sinkarib to take the management of his business into his own hands, would have added greatly to his fears. He applauded the wise measures of his sovereign, and promised to ne-

glect nothing which might be necessary to put the forces of the empire on a respectable footing.

The messengers of Pharoah departed from Nineveh with dispatches from Sinkarib, and convinced, by public report, that none among the learned of his court had been bold enough to undertake the explanation of the mysteries which the Egyptian monarch meant to propose.

Zefagnie dismissed from the solitude of Hicar all the slaves to whom he was known, except the gardener, in whom he had entire confidence: Their places were supplied, as well as those of the other domestics, by people to whom their master was totally unknown. Hicar, already informed of it, appeared to the gardener under the name of Abicam, a Chaldean astrologer, who was to be allowed the use of the philosophical apparatus which had belonged to Hicar; and was wholly engaged with Zefagnie's project for constructing the aerial palace.

Hicar's huntsmen were, by orders of his spouse, to over-run the deserts, in which the monstrous birds, called rocs\*, were accustomed to breed. They were to bring away two of them

\* *The Roc.* A bird of an enormous size, which is found in the deserts of Africa; it can carry a weight of two hundred pounds. Many are of opinion that it is fabulous.

them very young, with their first down upon them, and conduct them to the gardener of the solitary mansion.

Hicar, under the name of Abicam, was to have two young slaves, eleven years old, who must be rendered so familiar with the birds, that the instinct of the two species might seem to be blended together.

The birds were found, and delivered to the care of the young children, who left them neither night nor day. They fed and slept together. There was soon a very close familiarity established betwixt the four companions : and as the rocs as yet found great difficulty in raising themselves into the air, they followed the children every where, in the same manner as they would have followed their dam. The children got up upon the back of these birds, which took great pleasure in carrying them. They fixed upon them small convenient saddles, on which the heroes, as they were tied to them, sat very gracefully, and without running any hazard of falling. The birds took the first flight in the gardens ; they were kept by a long ribband fixed to their feet, which Hicar held in his hand. By degrees the children became able for them, and held the ribband which served them for reins. Obedient to the voice of their little companions, the birds waved aloft,  
or

or alighted at their pleasure. This docility increased with their strength; and there now remained nothing but to instruct the young children in what they were to say and do, on their arrival in Egypt: and, as they were both endowed with an excellent understanding, this part of the plan was the easiest to be executed.

Zefagnie came from time to time to enjoy the success of her undertaking, and accustomed both the children and the rocs to obey her orders. Every time Sinkarib came to visit her, she comforted him respecting his uneasiness and his fears; concealing from him, however, the means she was employing to relieve them.

The prince, roused from the slumber in which his vigilance and activity had been buried, ever since he ascended the throne, thought at length of giving new vigour to the languishing springs of his empire. He found very great resources in Nadan, who, being now awakened, displayed the treasures of knowledge with which Hicar had stored his mind. This minister beheld the rigorous term of three months fast approaching, without any preparation for war being undertaken, or any person nominated as the chief of the embassy; and therefore he flattered himself that he would reach the moment when his ambitious projects might burst into full view.

The

The defenceless frontiers were exposed to the inroads of an enemy, and the number of his subjects were diminishing every day ; for the Assyrians was passing over into Egypt, in order to withdraw themselves from the slavery with which they were threatened.

When the eighth month had elapsed since Sinkarib's letter had been dispatched to Pharoah, Hicar, under the name of Abicam, demanded permission to begin his journey. He was to be escorted by the Arabs of the most remote desert. It was not till then that Nadan learned that a Chaldean philosopher, protected by Zefagnie, had undertaken to satisfy the Egyptian king in every point. His surprise was greatly increased when he heard that Zefagnie herself wished to accompany this sage, whose ability she had warranted. He understood nothing of this extraordinary undertaking ; but, if it was unsuccessful, Nadan showed her all the dangers to which she would be exposed.

Every thing was now in readiness for the embassy, and all the retinue were assembled at Hicar's solitude. Sinkarib stole from the troublesome crowd, to enjoy the sweets of a private interview with his ambassador.

Maintain your tranquility, Sire, said the prudent minister ; together with the safety of your realm, I promise you the return of the subjects  
who



who have emigrated from your frontiers, the four years tribute, and the reimbursement of all your extraordinary expences. I leave you with Nadan, whom you must still employ. He possesses abilities, and will be necessary to you ; but do not lose sight of him even for a moment. At my return I will inform you why I think him dangerous. You are less connected with one another by your pleasures since you have filled up your time with public business, and you may easily conceal from him your suspicions.

The envoy of Sinkarib began his march. His whole equipage consisted of four elephants. He himself and his spouse, with two eunuchs, were on one tower : The two rocs, and their young guides, had each of them one, with a slave to serve them. Four women and two eunuchs loaded the back of the fourth elephant ; and an hundred slaves on horseback armed with a sabre and a spear, escorted this little party.

A silken net covered the tower in which the birds were shut up, that they might be concealed from the inspection of the curious. The object of this destination was to be kept a profound secret from all ; and the eunuchs walked night and day around these mysterious cages, and kept the indiscreet at a distance, and to prevent all conversation with their conductors, who themselves were convinced that the elephants

phants carried extraordinary presents to Pharoah.

The whole caravan arrived at Masser \* without having met with any difficulty. Hicar pitched his camp in a commodious place in the environs of the city, and, in quality of envoy from king Sinkarib, demanded an audience of Pharoah.

The Egyptian monarch, encouraged by the advice of the priests of Osiris, whose temple stands in the middle of the great lake Merov †, was well assured that he had proposed questions, to resolve which was above the capacity of mortals: He was on his guard against the illusions of magic; and was certain that, by his embarrassing propositions, he would disconcert the abilities, however great they might be, of the pretended sage who had been sent to him. He sent notice to the ambassador that he was ready to receive him; and, that he might command the greater respect, was surrounded with all the magnificence of his court.

Hicar, in a very extraordinary dress, unknown even at the court of Sinkarib, appeared before the monarch. The firmness of his

\* Masser, or Mefraim. Grand Cairo, built by Mefraim the son of Cham.

† Merov. The lake Merov, mentioned in Strabo's History of Ancient Egypt, and that of Diodorus Siculus.

his step, and his majestic air, already commanded the respect of the whole assembly: He advanced to the foot of the throne, and prostrated himself; and, when this first homage was paid, he thus spake:

“Sire! You have sent a challenge to my master, which he joyfully accepts, as the combat does not expose either the repose or the life of your two nations. You wish only to dispute concerning science and wisdom; and I come from him, admiring your greatness, to make known to you his, and secure him your esteem for ever. If, by the favour of heaven, I am successful in this undertaking, (permit me, sublime monarch! to recal your conditions to your memory), we have your sacred word, that you will for four years pay a tribute on all the productions of Egypt. If I am found incapable of answering the questions agreed upon; my life shall atone for my audacity; and the king of Assyria, whose respect for science knows no bounds, shall subject his crown to you, and engage to pay annually into your treasures whatever ransom you shall be pleased to demand.”

The dignified and modest air of the Assyrian ambassador, the arrangement, the precision, and the force of his speech, astonished Pharaoh; and he reproached himself for his rashness. Could a sovereign, sunk in effeminacy, entirely

entirely under the dominion of his passions, who suffered his subjects to groan under the yoke of tyranny, could he be surrounded with such men as this, who had explained himself with so much courage and wisdom? Would they devote themselves for the safety of a prince, every moment of whose life was marked by weaknesses and errors? In the situation in which the Assyrian ambassador then was, what could the old Hicar have said better, although he had been still alive?

These reflections prevented Pharaoh from returning an immediate answer to the speech of the ambassador; but at length he broke silence.

“ Envoy of Sinkarib, what is your name?”  
—“ My name is Abicam, the humblest of my sovereign’s slaves. I am one of those worms who have hitherto crept undistinguished about the throne. At the court of my master, trust and honours are conferred on people more expert than I am.”—“ Surely,” replied Pharaoh, whose surprise was still increased, “ if I have before me the meanest of the servants of the Assyrian king, his dominions must be peopled with divinities! But, since you are so inferior, why was you made choice of, in preference to so many illustrious men, since Sinkarib pretends so much esteem for me?”

Sire ! replied the ambassador, the bee, placed in the scale of existence betwixt birds and insects, is the least of all the winged animals. Yet, see the wonderful work it composes ! It is admitted with distinction to the tables of the most illustrious sovereigns ; and, in the eye of Sinkarib, the small and the great are of equal estimation. He judges them from the pinnacle of greatness to which the Destinies have raised him. This answer delighted the Egyptian king, who, although dazzled with his own magnificence, yet beheld with enthusiasm the merit and knowledge which seemed to rise above all ordinary bounds. He dismissed Hicar, offering him for a habitation the most beautiful palace in Masser ; but the husband of Zefagnie chose rather to return to his companion, where every thing necessary for him was sent by the orders of Pharoah.

Scarcely had Hicar retired under his tent, when a minister from the king came to acquaint him, that in three days he must return to the palace prepared to answer the questions that should be put to him.

The vizir, completely skilled in the art of courts, received the Egyptian minister in a manner of which this last had formed no idea, and sent him back, convinced that the

the man with whom he had just conversed was above the condition of mortals.

The three days were elapsed ; and Hicar repaired to the palace of the king. He was waited for at the gates, to be conducted with great ceremony into Pharoah's presence, who was seated on his throne, clothed in a purple robe, embroidered with gold, and richly adorned with jewels ; with a most splendid and magnificent court around him, consisting of all the grantees of the kingdom.

The Assyrian minister having saluted him respectfully, waited with downcast eyes, and his hands folded upon his breast, till some one should speak to him.

" Abicam," said the king to him, " every thing in the universe is enigmatical, and every object of contemplation conceals an important truth. Cast your eyes on me, and around my throne, and tell me what I resemble in the midst of my court ?"

" Sire," replied Hicar, " here I am no less struck, than I would be if the Nile, which covers the divinities of my country, were to fall, and disclose to my view Bilelsanam, surrounded with all his power.

The king of Egypt, pleased with this answer, ordered the ambassador to be clothed in one of the most beautiful robes in the palace, and de-



ferred the remainder of the questions till next day, at the same hour.

The king received him then dressed in white, and his courtiers wore suits of different colours, which were by no means so splendid.

“What do you see here?” asked Pharoah.

“I see, Sir, the fertile plains of Egypt uncultivated, dried up, without the smallest vegetation, waiting for those treasures, which are soon to descend from the summits of the mountains of Ethiopia: This is the resemblance of the court with which you are surrounded.

“Your vast turban represents the reviving snows, on which the heavens appear to rest.

“Your eyes, and your mouth, are the beneficent sources, which are to scatter far and wide the nourishing salts.

“Your hands, like the mouths of the Delta, will distribute your superfluous wealth; and every thing that breathes will be transported into a new being.”

Scarcely had he finished this reply, when an emotion of universal admiration appeared in the countenance of all. Pharoah, after ordering a dress still more sumptuous than the former to be given to the ambassador of Sinkarib, appointed the following day for a third audience.

Hicar, on his return, found the sovereign so dazzling with the number and brilliancy of his  
jewels,

jewels, that he could not look stedfastly at him; his vizirs also were covered with them. The effect of so much light forced the ambassador to cast down his eyes; and Pharoah, availing himself of this confusion, said to him, "Sage of Assyria, what sensation do you feel?"

"I awoke late," replied the ambassador; "and my eyes having scarcely got out of the darkness, in which they were wrapped up during my repose, are not yet familiar with the rays of the sun, whose perfect image I now behold in your majesty. But, by putting my hand before my eyes, I am able to contemplate and distinguish, together with the ornaments of the Zodiac, the seven planets which borrow their light from the star which illuminates the universe."

Pharoah was betrayed into an exclamation of applause. But it was yet too soon to confess himself overcome. Even when the ambassador should have given a full explanation of every question which might be proposed, the aerial palace would still remain to be built; and he would have it in his power to impose laws, instead of receiving them.

In the mean time, in order to put the wisdom of Hicar to a new trial, he spoke to him thus: "You have made me three answers successively, with which I must confess myself

pleased ; now, after having pointed out so well the allusion of the splendour which surrounds me, to what would you compare your own king Simkarib ?”

“ Sire,” replied Hicar, “ I never raised my thoughts so high. This attempt, totally new, surpasses all my efforts. It is almost impossible for me to fix at once on all his resemblances ; for, under each of them, I could exhibit him in the most splendid point of view.—The friend of peace, he is like the wind of the south, which, moving without interruption, scarcely ruffles the surface of the ocean. If the wind of the north should dispute his claim to glory, then, conscious of his strength, he hurls forth the storm. Lightening flashes in the bosom of lightning ; the thunder bursts in awful peals ; the waves of the sea shake the solid rocks, and disclose the foundations of the earth.”

These words of Hicar were terrible as the tempest they described : The king of Egypt and all his court were dismayed ; and Simkarib was elevated, in his mind, high as the vaults of the palace of Masser. — A profound silence testified at once the abilities of the orator, and the consternation of the audience. Though borne away by his enthusiasm, and notwithstanding the formidable greatness in which he had represented his sovereign, Hicar

car had given offence to none. The messenger of peace, it was his duty to make war be dreaded; and he was furnished with an unforeseen opportunity of inspiring the Egyptian court with respect for the forces of his master.

The pride of Pharaoh was shocked when any one even hinted at his having a rival upon earth; but the presence alone of the Assyrian ambassador shewed him this was possible.

“Men are not to be reckoned as we reckon animals,” said he to himself; “one camel is worth no more than another; but the man who is before me is worth a whole army! The discourse he has now held, would in any other man have been the highest pitch of audacity, but in him it is the sublimity of courage.

After these reflections, he ordered the magnificence of the robes, with which he intended to honour Abicam, to be still increased; and then thus addressed him:

“You will return to-morrow, Abicam; I have still one question to propose, to which you must give me a satisfying answer. The demands I have made upon Sinkarib shall not be in vain; nor shall the fervour of your zeal deceive me, respecting the forces which he can bring against me. If you come off victorious

in

in every point, I shall look upon your triumph as a favour from heaven, which I ought to respect. But, if I have the advantage in any article whatever, nothing shall prevent me from prosecuting my rights."

"I also will demand mine," replied Hicar, "when they shall have been clearly established;" and he was about to take his leave of the king for the fourth time, when the arrival of a messenger from Assyria, with dispatches for the king of Egypt, was announced to the pretended Abicam. Hicar demanded permission to bring forward the courier; he received the letter, and, after putting it upon his heart and his head, delivered it to the sovereign to whom it was addressed. Pharaoh opened it; and these were its contents.

"SINKARIB, *King of Assyria*, to PHARAOH, *King of Egypt*."

When reason and good faith preside, every difference may be settled.

"As my servant Abicam is with you, he will, no doubt, satisfy you in whatever you may desire of him; and I suppose you will be no less pleased with him than with me, who desire nothing but peace and your  
"friend-

“ friendship on which I depend as fully, as  
 “ if you had already promised them. I am  
 “ very desirous, brother, to be on the same  
 “ terms with all my neighbours; but I have  
 “ some who are more ambitious than wise. All  
 “ are not endowed with an enlightened under-  
 “ standing. I have laboured to render the for-  
 “ ces of my empire so respectable, that I may  
 “ be able to make them repent the least in-  
 “ fringement of the treaties into which we  
 “ have entered. But I stand in need of nine  
 “ hundred katars \*, to complete the payment  
 “ of sixty thousand chariots of war which I  
 “ have equipped; and I beseech you to ad-  
 “ vance them: Your delivering this sum into  
 “ the hands of my ambassador shall be confi-  
 “ dered as a mark of your confidence, which  
 “ will entitle you still more to my esteem.”

Pharaoh was led from surprise to admiration  
 by the wisdom and firmness of Hicar's replies;  
 and the letter of Sinkarib still increased his as-  
 tonishment; as it was a proof, that this mo-  
 narch was perfectly at ease respecting every  
 thing that might be required of his ambassa-  
 dor; and that he considered himself before-  
 hand as victorious in the proposed challenge.

in divi nati and holulu and Besides,

\* A gold coin which answers to three hundred livres  
 French money.



Besides, it suggested to his mind a very formidable power, in speaking of Sinkarib's having augmented his military force, by the addition of sixty thousand chariots of war. This was not the style in which Nadan had spoken of them to the deputies of Pharaoh; the Assyrian king seemed to have intended to construct only forty thousand chariots, and even this he did not believe that prince could have accomplished. But, instead of this, Sinkarib's letter made mention of sixty thousand; and he requested nine hundred katars to supply this enormous expence, which he talked of as a trifle. In any other situation, Pharaoh would have considered this lofty style as a political trick; but the consideration alone of the minister by whom it was presented determined him to give credit to the letter.

"Abicam," said he to him, "before complying with Sinkarib's request, I must insist upon the construction of the palace I have demanded, and which you have engaged to build. Fulfil your obligation, and I shall be directed in my answer by its execution.

Your majesty will be pleased to point out the place you have made choice of for its situation, replied Hicar. Although this little wonder must not rest upon the earth, yet it must have certain points of correspondence, which it

is necessary to determine. You must give in a plan to the architect who is in my train, and who has orders to conform himself to your ideas. You must likewise order materials to be collected on a spot of ground within the reach of labourers, who must put them into the hands of my workmen.

I only want, said the king, a pavilion of one hundred square feet, with a dome of a proportioned elevation, surrounded with a terrace of twenty feet in circumference, defended by a railing three feet and a half higher. I wish a ladder to hang from it, which shall almost reach the ground, so as that one may conveniently put their foot upon it as they alight from a camel. This pavilion, of which the outside must be adorned according to the taste of your engineer, must be an hundred and fifty feet from the ground, and fronting the quarter where you have pitched your camp. In four days you shall have as many materials as would build four such edifices, and workmen ready to deliver them into the hands of yours; but consider well my stipulations.

“I should have the honour of recalling them to you”, Sire,” replied Hicar, “if what is committed to writing could possibly be forgot. In four days your majesty shall be a witness of the complete execution of your wishes.

The

The precision and coolness of Hicar's answers completely confounded Pharoah : He was now convinced that he had to do with a powerful magician : As soon as the Assyrian ambassador was withdrawn, he sent for the college of the priests of Osiris and Anubis, in order to consult them ; and they came at his command.

He laid before them the embarrassment into which he thought to have thrown Sinkarib, and that into which he himself had been thrown since his propositions had been accepted. " This king," said he to him, " has sent me a learned astrologer, who guesses all my thoughts. Far from being obscure, as these people commonly are, he enlightens my own ideas, and presents them to me much more accurately than they had occurred to myself. You who are an adept in all the sciences, can you tell me who this man is ? Of what kind is his knowledge ? And on what resources he depends for building, before my own eyes, a pavilion in the air, the dimensions of which he has just now required, with the same confidence that one would require those of the most simple palace which was to be constructed on the ground ?

" Sire !" replied the oldest of the priests, " ever since this Abicam has been at your court, we have endeavoured, by every mean we could think of, to discover the nature of his con-

con-

constellation. We have applied the rule to all those which compose the zodiac, without having met with the star which directs him; and we begin to suspect that it must be situated in a heaven above that to which we have directed our labours and observations. He is come from among the powerful magicians of Chaldea; and it is possible that he is one of them. But, skilled as he is in his art, it will be impossible for him to form any real thing by natural means, or give probability to an illusion, if three only of our number oppose the use and gradual unfolding of the means he employs.

On the day he intends to build, we will betake ourselves to the place marked out; and we have little doubt, but that his workmen, if he really has any, will be unable to support the fire of our piercing looks, and the effect of our magical charms.

The king, taking courage at this discourse, ordered every thing requisite for the construction of the pavilion to be ready on the appointed spot: Four thousand Ethiopians, six hundred chariots, an hundred elephants, and the most expert workmen in Egypt, were employed in collecting the necessary materials.

Hicar and Zefagnie observed these great preparations without the least uneasiness; the

means they were to employ were so simple, that they could not doubt of their success.

In the mean time, the term prescribed had elapsed; and a herald had already intimated to Hicar, that the king of Egypt waited for him at the palace, whither he immediately repaired.

“ Well, now !” sage Abicam,” said Pharoah, “ your wishes are fulfilled. Every article necessary for building a whole palace is at the appointed place. Are Sinkarib’s workmen ready to begin ?”

They have only waited for the signal of your majesty’s pleasure, replied Hicar; and if, in an hour hence, your majesty is disposed to go to the place marked out, your desires shall all be satisfied. Meanwhile I return to my camp to hasten the work.

What new subject of admiration for the Egyptian monarch ! Abicam was a man who never seemed to distrust his resources. The king gave orders for an hundred chariots to be instantly yoked, that he might afford his court an opportunity of enjoying this very singular spectacle. The college of the priests were added to this train; which was still farther increased by an immense crowd of people from Masser.

Hicar and Zefagnie waited to receive Pharoah under arms; and the whole party were armed by order of the ambassador. He had

put

put himself at their head, and appeared as formidable under the banners of Mars as under the shield of Minerva.

The four elephants, covered with towers adorned with waving flags, were placed in the van. The two rocs and their guides were each in their tower, and only waited the signals they were to obey. As soon as Hicar could distinguish the chariot of Pharaoh, he made Zefagnie ascend his tower, ordered the music to begin, and set off himself at full gallop to meet the sovereign.

Seeing a horseman advancing so gracefully, and with such a martial appearance, the Egyptian king never once thought that it was the Assyrian ambassador. Hicar alighted from his horse, and was soon recognised by the king, to whom he paid his respects.

"What! is it you, Abicam!" said he to him; "how can you thus remove from yourself the burden of years, and display before me as much gracefulness and vigour, as you have already shown me wisdom."—"Sire!" replied Hicar, "your majesty extols too highly the weak abilities which you are kind enough to remark in Abicam; they are the effect of that noble emulation with which the king my master inspires his ministers. But, let us not delay to fulfil the engagements agreed upon



with your majesty ; my workmen are all ready, and eager to gratify your impatience ; and they only wait your majesty's order to give you new proofs both of their zeal and dexterity.

“ Let them begin,” said Pharaoh. “ Hicar then turned towards the elephants, and made a signal with his hand, upon which the net which covered the two towers disappeared. A woman then appeared, and ascended into the air. She was dressed after the Assyrian manner, in a purple-coloured robe, all bespangled with gold ; a veil of gauze fluttered in the wind from the top of a tiara enriched with diamonds, which, struggling with the rays of the sun, seemed to rival their splendour. Every object around her, in which she cast her lively and piercing eyes, immediately felt itself completely subjected to her will ; and the expression of her features discovered at once the dignity and grace of her sex. Thrice she struck the air with her rod, and, in a distinct and firm voice, pronounced the following words.—

“ Humble slaves of the powerful king Sin-  
“ karib ! obey the orders of the great king  
“ Pharaoh !”

At that instant a great noise was heard ; and the rocs leaving their towers, carried above the clouds their young conductors, two of the most beautiful objects it was possible to behold. More  
splendid

splendid and less perfidious than the son of Venus, they appeared, notwithstanding the rapidity with which they were carried, to enjoy themselves very much on the back of their aerial steeds, directing their motion towards heaven, from whence they seemed to have been originally descended.

Garlands of flowers, whose vivid colours were totally eclipsed by that of their complexion, were the only restraint they had imposed upon their beautiful hair; and their tresses floated in the wind, which at one time scattered them, and at another raised them up, and appeared to give them the power of wings.

Their garments of coloured gauze, yielding to the laws of motion, represented around them a variegated and luminous circle, like the scarf of Iris.

They had in their hand a golden trowel, which they handled with an easy carelessness; an ingenious smile which animated their countenance was an evidence that they were not afraid to trust themselves to the element through which they were to pass.

Pharaoh, and all the multitude; stood mute through surprise; but they, as well as the train of Hicar, who were strangers to these mysteries, soon sent up a shout of admiration. The officers of the Egyptian guard approached those of Hicar,

liberal

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and

and thus inquired of them, "What prodigy is this which we have beheld?"—We are perfectly ignorant of it, replied the Assyrians.

Pharaoh was in extacy; but the astonishment of the priests was beyond all bounds. The monarch having at length recovered the use of his senses, asked them what they thought of this miracle?

"Sire!" said they, "this is a display of magic superior to every human effort, and far beyond our knowledge." The king then addressed Hicar: "Abicam," said he to him, "by what name do you call the forcerefs, or the goddesses, whom we have just seen?—Whither are the genii gone whom she commands." "Most powerful monarch!" replied Hicar, "there is neither goddess, nor forcerefs, nor genius here; you have seen only a woman and two children; but they are subjects of the illustrious Sinkarib."—"Shall we see them return?"—They have your pavilion to build, and the woman you saw is the architect; look up to the heavens; your workmen are descending. As soon as Hicar perceived that the birds were within reach of his voice, he called out to them, "Slaves of Sinkarib, do your duty!"

At that instant the woman again appeared; and, with a stroke of her rod, brought the children over her head. "Workmen," said she

to them, "your foundations are dug, go and demand the materials necessary to begin your work; there are my dimensions." And at the same time she threw them a bunch of ribbands, which the children laid hold of, and then directed their flight to the place where the workmen were waiting for them with all the articles they had prepared. Pharaoh went to the same place; and the priests, followed by the astrologers, were eager to mingle among the workmen.

The rocs hovered for some time over the labourers, and then descended so far as to enable their young guides to be heard with their clear and melodious voices. "Subjects of Pharaoh," said they, "give us stones, lime, and sand, that we may build the pavilion for your master." The slaves of the Egyptian king, and the labourers, stood gaping in astonishment.

Great king! exclaimed the lady from the top of the tower, these are effeminate Egyptians, whom your majesty employs in your service. Exert here your power, and that spring which gives energy to such hearts as have been debased by slavery: Order the bastinado to be applied to the soles of their feet. Pharaoh also was lost in astonishment. Zefagnie then addressed her own workmen. "Subjects of Sinkarib! Your majesty wishes you to please Pharaoh, in every thing:  
It

It is indeed impossible for you to touch the earth, but you may come extremely near it; put yourself within the reach of those who cannot assist you;" and, at the same time, making a signal with her rod, which they were accustomed to obey, they began to descend by a circular flight. The Ethiopians fell flat with their faces on the ground; and such, as from mere stupidity remained standing, were violently overturned by the feet of the rocs.

The priests of Osiris, forming themselves into a circle, with their high priest in the center, stood firm in their places. They had assembled in a circular order, in order to execute the design they had formed, of dispelling by their looks the enchantment they expected to see. But, in order to have kept up even the appearance of opposing rod to rod, it would have been necessary for their chief to have preserved his faculties. But, the moment he saw the children begin to descend, he was lost in astonishment, and the ensign of his power dropped from his hand. All his train were in horror, when a stroke of the truly powerful rod directed the storm towards them: At the prompt obedience and noise of the birds, you might have seen them fall upon one another, wrap themselves up in the folds of their garments in order to escape so many dangers, and in a short time this college

lege of learned men were nothing but a lifeless heap. The plain, which before was covered with an innumerable crowd of people, appeared a desert full of desolation. Pharaoh, whose soul was haughty, but full of vigour, was the only one whom astonishment did not completely overcome; and thus he addressed Hicar, who had remained always at his side.

“ Abicam !” said he, “ I am dazzled with chimeras, and confounded with appearances. Surrounded by my magi, I have depended too much on their power. Since the death of Hicar the Chaldean, I had presumed that there was not a man in Assyria who could enter the lists with me. You have corrected my mistake, and forced from me that esteem of which I have hitherto given you but trifling marks. Sovereign of an industrious people, I thought myself more powerful than Sinkarib; but he has opposed to me a woman only, and all my people, are by her reduced to mere machines. I sincerely wish to become the friend and ally of your king; and I beseech you to be our mediator. Come tomorrow, to my palace, and all our conditions shall be fulfilled.

Notwithstanding this speech, it may easily be presumed that the king of Egypt was inwardly mortified thus to confess his defeat; but he was a politician, and resolved to hide the real  
motive



motive of his resolution : By the most noble behaviour, he endeavoured to conceal the dangers with which he was threatened by the resentment of Sinkarib.

The rocs and their guides had disappeared ; and, as soon as the lady who directed these wonders had seen their effect, she immediately re-entered her tower, which was again covered with the mysterious veil. The plain, which had formerly looked like a desert, was peopled anew, and Pharaoh, followed by his court, had returned to his palace. Hicar had alighted from his horse, and ordered his guard to lay down their arms, and retire to their tents. The rocs, and their guides, who had been concealed in a neighbouring forest, had returned to their towers, and covered themselves with the net. And Hicar and Zefagnie, now disarmed, were congratulating one another on the fortunate success of their ingenious stratagem, and settling the plan of their future conduct.

“ I will vigorously demand,” said Hicar, “ every article of the signed conditions, and tomorrow every thing will be agreed upon. The imagination of the Egyptian king is very much affected ; his people are equally astonished ; and I will avail myself of this disposition in both to advance the interest of Sinkarib. The treasury must be filled which Nadan has exhausted ; the forces

forces of the kingdom must be re-established; and the frontiers must be put in a state of defence. Should Pharaoh ever learn that he has been imposed upon by a stratagem, it would be impossible for us to resist his rage. As soon, therefore, as we shall have returned to my solitude, I will make a trusty huntsman conduct the rocs into the middle of the deserts; he will separate the children from them during the night; and, having set them upon a camel, bring them back to me. Sinkarib would be unable to resist the curiosity of seeing the same manoeuvres displayed before him, which have just now astonished Egypt; and it is necessary to keep up the belief of a miracle in the mind of the king, and even of the Assyrians. It will inspire our people with confidence, and prevent them from throwing themselves into the chains of their enemies abroad, in seeking to shun them at home. Not, added the sage Hicar, that I would wish to deceive the king of Egypt on every point; but he shall learn from me no circumstance which it is of importance to conceal from him. In duty to my own character, and to that of an ambassador, I must inform him in time who Abicam was; and for this purpose I will employ no other artifice than that I have already made use of, in causing a false carrier to deliver me a letter from Sinkarib, which in reality I brought

brought sealed from Nineveh, to be used as occasion should require. After these wise arrangements, this happy pair grew calm, and waited without uneasiness the events of to-morrow.

Every thing was now ready in the city of Masser, and in the palace of the king, for giving the ambassador the most magnificent reception. He was no longer treated as the envoy of a prince, who was before hand considered as a vassal of Pharaoh; a deputation of the grandees of the court went out to meet him at the gates of the city; and, when he approached the throne, the sovereign, after receiving his homage, descended to embrace him.

“Dear Abicam!” said he to him, “distinguished and valuable man! From your presence, your words, and your actions, I have learned what King Sinkarib is. I command thousands of slaves, but he governs them. Assyria would have had much to boast of had it only produced Hicar and you! Certainly you were a disciple of this sage? You have been well acquainted with him?—Sire! replied Abicam, I will in time discover to you the connection I may have had with a man for whom you have preserved so much esteem.—(If I have failed in my respect for Sinkarib, replied Pharaoh, it has been owing to the murder of that illustrious man. Ever since that event, I have looked up-  
on

on the king of Assyria as a tyrant, of whom the world ought to be freed.)—" And, if Hicar were still alive," said Abicam, " he would endeavour to vindicate his sovereign from the detestable calumnies which have been thrown out upon this monarch on his account. Pardon me, Sire ! if for a moment I differ from you in opinion : The reputation and interests of that vizir were as dear to me as to any other person, and my attachment to him can end only with my life ; yet I know (and you shall one day know it likewise), that he was not, in every instance, irreproachable.

Sixteen years before his death, Sire, he himself, in the most obliging manner, whetted the sword with which he was to be struck, and gave it to Sinkarib, whose hands were to use it.—I am not permitted to say more : The interpreter to you of my master's will, I must not at present act the part of his confidant. But, to return to Hicar, I cannot help blaming him : He aspired too soon after repose and retirement. Man is born for labour ; and the tranquility he pursues is a shadow. When public affairs are in the hands of a wise man, he ought not to abandon them to an imprudent minister.

" I begin," said Pharoah, " to be convinced that Hicar may have had his failings, since your wisdom has pointed them out. And besides,

I consider you as so much above him, that you would not seek for faults in his character, if in reality there were none.

You will even be convinced, Sire, that I am in no respect superior to Hicar. I have unhappily as many faults to reproach myself with as I ever discovered in him. —“But,” said Pharoah, “before we speak of the conditions, (which I already look upon as fixed), Will you not inform me as to the nature of that object whom we beheld under the appearance of a woman, and whom you have announced as the architect of Sinkarib?—I will tell you, Sire; but it must be kept a secret from the chief of your ministers. She was sister to the deceased king; and consequently she is aunt to the present king of Assyria. She made a voluntary offer of coming to fulfil your designs, on condition that she should remain unknown.—I cannot, said the king, give her a greater proof of my admiration, than by yielding to her wishes: But I have a painful effort to overcome, in withholding from her that homage which is due to her birth, her merit, and, above all, to the uncommon power with which she is invested.—She is entitled, Sire, to the most distinguished attention; but her power does not deserve to be so much extolled by your majesty, since every woman of Assyria possesses merit.

Let

Let us sign our treaty, Abicam : It must be done by you and me.

I aspire to the friendship of Sinkarib, and wish to see him in Nineveh, and admire his glory. Orders are already given to pay to you the tenth of the revenues of Egypt for four years. To this I have added the nine hundred katars which your sovereign asked from me to complete the construction of his chariots of war. Tell him that I will ascend them together with him to attack his enemies : I shall order the return of all his subjects who have taken refuge in Egypt : And here is a letter which you will deliver him from me.

“ PHARAOH, *king of Egypt,* to SINCARIB, *king of Assyria.*”

Glory to the powers from whom proceed the favours which are shed upon the earth ! Glory to him who is crowned with them !

“ I wished,” brother, “ to contend with you  
“ in wisdom, and myself imposed the terms ;  
“ but I have failed in the struggle ; and pay  
“ most willingly, in consideration of the excel-  
“ lent things I have heard and seen. You  
“ demand of me nine hundred katars to de-



“fray your extraordinary expences; and I am  
“extremely happy in having it in my power to  
“oblige you. The only requital I ask for this is,  
“that you will exchange with me an offensive  
“and defensive treaty of alliance, which, sealed  
“with my great seal, will be delivered to you by  
“your enlightened ambaffador.”

Abicam, loaded with presents and with honour, and Zefagnie, enriched with a diamond star, resumed the road to Nineveh, carrying with them the terms of the Egyptian king. Two grandees of his court, at the head of a detachment of cavalry, escorted the embassy to the frontiers of Assyria.

Hicar was somewhat uneasy at this honour; he did not wish to see so many eyes fixed upon the cages which contained the birds. In strict policy he should have put them to death, and buried them in his tent; but he was incapable of doing harm to animals which had rendered him such essential service. He contented himself with placing around them a constant and watchful guard; and, whether he was obliged to stop during the day, or to pitch his camp in order to rest during the night, he did this in such a manner, as that it was impossible to discover his innocent stratagem. In the mean time, he had dispatched a warrior to Sinkarib, with a letter, in the name of Abicam, which informed

him

him of his success at large, and acquainted him with the return of his subjects under his government, and the arrival of the nine hundred katars, in addition to the ransoms which he brought.

Nadan read this letter, and was confounded at it. "Who is this Abicam," said he, "who is patronised by Zefagnie, and who, in so short a time, has performed so great wonders? Sinkarib, even when his glory was at the highest pitch, would have thought himself very happy in coming off upon equal terms with the king of Egypt; and yet this last has become his tributary, at the very time when he had only to show himself in order to invade him! Nadan was astonished at all this; and, as he beheld, in this stranger, a man too dangerous for him, he was already contriving in what manner he might get rid of him: While, on the other hand, Sinkarib was returning thanks to heaven for having preserved his old vizir, to extricate him from the difficulties into which he had fallen by his own negligence.

Public report loudly proclaimed the miracles which had been performed at Masser. Is the man whom you have employed a magician, said Nadan to Sinkarib?—"No," replied the king; "but he is a most wonderful man." While this event engaged the attention of the court

and the city, Zefagnie had returned to her palace; and the pretended Abicam had intimated to the king that he would repose himself for two days in his solitude, before he came to give an account of his embassy.

Sinkarib flew to the palace of his aunt, and learned the happy success of an invention, of which they had not communicated to him even the idea. He congratulated himself on his good fortune; but, exactly as the sage Hicar had foreseen, he wished to see these birds and children, by whose means the pride of Pharoah had been humbled. That is impossible, said Zefagnie; Hicar, in engaging them for your service, promised them their liberty, and they are already in the enjoyment of it. Destroy not the illusion by which Pharoah is deceived; and, that you may succeed better in this, allow it to remain in the minds of your people. I am extremely happy in having seen you before my husband had made his appearance again at the palace: As soon as he must resume his offices, he cannot be announced there under any other name than his own; and you must not permit the ungrateful Nadan to remain either as his colleague or inferior. This wretch was the author of all those dark intrigues which dishonoured my husband in your esteem: So long as it was necessary, you have supported him near  
you;

you; but, as God has at length restored your ancient vizir, you ought not to save this dangerous minister, who conspired his ruin, and would soon complete your own. His head ought to fall upon the scaffold; but I request the favour of your leaving it to the disposal of Hicar. The unworthy Nadan is his nephew, and must be punished by that hand, the beneficence of which he has forgotten.

Sinkarib yielded to the wishes of Zefagnie, and immediately returned to his palace, where Nadan expected him with uneasiness. The king himself was not altogether free from it; and, as soon as he perceived Nadan, he addressed the chief of Hicar's guard, who had been a servant in the innermost apartments. "Cause the criminal to be bound?" said he, pointing to the vizir, "and let him be immediately conducted to the palace of the grand vizir Hicar, his uncle. Deliver him up to the orders of Zefagnie, and resume yourself, at the head of your band, the same offices in her palace with which you was formerly entrusted."

Nadan was instantly arrested, and shut up in the very prison where his uncle had been concealed, in order to screen himself from his fury.

After this, Sinkarib assembled his council, and communicated to them his good fortune in having found his former vizir Hicar; he recounted

counted the services he had rendered him in Egypt, and predicted the tranquility of Assyria under the administration of so enlightened a minister as he had this day recalled to his office.

Hicar entered the city, amidst the acclamations of the people, who conducted him in triumph to the foot of the throne, where the artful courtiers gave him a most distinguished reception. The minister then delivered the letter which he carried to Sinkarib; and prevailed upon the monarch to sign the treaty of alliance, and to return it with a favourable answer to Pharaoh. Hicar had no difficulty in persuading him to this; and a messenger was instantly sent into Egypt with these dispatches, which the king accompanied with the following letter.

*"To the Powerful King PHARAOH, Sovereign Lord  
of the fertile Egypt."*

"Sire! Hicar hath been recalled to life,  
that, under the name of Abicam, he might  
admire the knowledge and virtues which are  
the ornament of your august person. If he  
did not make himself known to your majesty,  
you must ascribe this reserve only to the  
measures which obliged him to support the  
character

“character under which he appeared at your  
“court. Your majesty will now be able to  
“comprehend what Abicam said to the dispa-  
“ragement of Hicar.”

When this vizir had openly, and, to the satisfaction of all, resumed the reins of government, he returned to his palace, where he had heard that Nadan was confined in chains. He resolved, though with regret, to speak to this criminal: He could not, and indeed ought not, on any account, to grant him his pardon; yet he did not wish for his death.

He made the cave, which was lighted by a lamp, be opened; and there he beheld his perfidious nephew stretched upon the straw. “Well! Nadan,” said he to him, “do you recollect what you have been, what you have done, and what you now are? Can you think upon yourself?”—“Not without blushing,” replied Nadan.—“The tiger,” continued Hicar, “stained with blood and slaughter, passing near a fountain, saw its own image, which filled it with horror. While you lived in your guilt, you did not listen to remorse; to-day feel its bitterness!”—“Alas! I do feel and know it.”—“No, you do not feel it. Did it equal your crimes, it would devour you.”—“Pardon me,



me, my uncle; consider that the same blood flows in the veins of us both."

"Once, when the Ganges overflowed its banks, it deposited some of its waters in a hollow betwixt two mountains. They became corrupted, and spread infection all around, till they were cursed by the inhabitants of the neighbouring places. How! said they, dares any one curse the waters of the salutary river, without which man would soon perish for thirst! Pestilential waters! replied a genius, the Ganges do not acknowledge those waters from which nothing but deadly exhalations arise! You, Nadan, call me no more your uncle, nor yourself my nephew."

"Well, Hicar! you are generous and noble, treat me like a man."—"It would not be to recognise humanity in you, but to avenge it of your enormities. Once an wolf was taken among the lambs, which a priest of Osiris was tending: Spare me, said it to the keeper of the flock; behold my mouth and my paws, it is clear that I am innocent. The crime is in thy heart, replied the keeper. But, although you should suppose so, replied the wolf, you are a minister of peace; you never use the knife but in sacrifice, and I am too vile to be offered up; my blood would stain your robe and your hands. It is only the blood of the  
just

just that stains, said the priest, as he plunged the knife in its throat; die wretch! I sacrifice thee to the tranquility of the flocks which are in the world."

"You intend then to behave to me as a judge," said Nadan.—"Wretch! when thou speakest of justice, thou makest me tremble. Is it possible for me to do justice to thee? Recall to mind my kindness and thy treachery; my affection, and thy cruelty! The law, conscious of its weakness, has denounced no punishment against ingratitude. Heaven has reserved this for itself."

"Well," said Nadan, "banish me into the most dreadful desert."—"Even there you would be pursued by the furies; nor will they abandon you even after death. This is the punishment which you deserve; and I am not so cruel as to deliver you up to it. All that I wish, is, that remorse may sharpen against you its keenest arrows; that thy guilty heart may be pierced with them; and that you may become at least sensible to grief! Delivered at length to repentance, you would repair (at least in part) the atrocity of your conduct by your tears."—"Alas! you behold me shed them." "Yes, traitor, thou dost weep! but it is to see my life rescued from thy stroke; and to behold thyself in chains, and unable to avenge thyself."

thyself. We must inflict such punishments as shall chastise, not thy crimes, but thy pride."

When he had said this, Hicar departed, bewailing a nephew whom he had no hopes of bringing to repentance. Some days after he went again to see him; but he found him dead in his prison: In this manner was the world delivered from the fatal existence of this ungrateful man. He had hanged himself by his hair, on a nail which was fixed in the walls of the dungeon.

Hicar and Zefagnie consoled one another: And, in the attachment of Sinkarib, they found a full recompense for all the grief into which Nadan had plunged them. The monarch, instructed by the dangers to which he had been exposed under a perfidious and wicked minister, now devoted himself wholly to business, and gained the affection of his people, and the admiration of the neighbouring powers.

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SCHAMRIAR appeared to be delighted with the history of Sinkarib and his two vizirs, which was thus concluded; He was pleased with the punishment of the ungrateful Nadan, and the manner in which Hicar had supported the character of Abicam at the court of Pharaoh. The  
flight

flight of the rocs, and the address of the young children, had contributed greatly to his amusement.

Dinarzade had taken a peculiar interest in Zefagnie. You have described, sister, said she to Scheherazade, a woman for whom I have conceived such an esteem, that I have never thought of asking her age; and, even had you told me that she was advanced in years, I certainly would have forgot it, amid the splendour of so many charms, and the dignity of her manners.

But, as this history has been long, and as we ought to beware of fatiguing the attention of the sultan our sovereign, I should wish, sister, that you would relate the story of a certain Schebandad of Surat, which I remember formerly to have heard with very great pleasure.

I would gladly undertake it, said the beautiful sultaneſs, did not the day which begins to appear advise us to follow some better employment.

At least, sister, replied Dinarzade, you will engage to relate it to-morrow. I shall, at the command of our invincible sultan.

The next day the sultaneſs, being reminded of her promise, with the approbation of the sultan, thus began.

VOL. II. THE END OF THE SECOND PART. The

*The History of the Family of the Schebandad of Surat.*

A SCHEBANDAD of Surat \*, by his marriage, had had four sons, for whom he procured wives, and whom he settled advantageously in the world. But it so happened, that, at the end of twenty years, only one child remained to each. The three elder brothers had each a son, and the younger a daughter.

Vasumé was the name of this young daughter. Both nature and education had conspired to render her accomplished. Nothing was talked of at Surat, but the charms of her figure, her talents, and her wit. Her three cousins loved her to distraction. Their whole ambition was to gain her hand. This rivalry might be attended with dangerous consequences; and the Schebandad, who foresaw this, assembled his family, and spoke thus to his children:

My children, says he to them, Vasumé can only be the wife of one husband. Her father and I believe you all equally worthy of her hand. But, as the happiness of your amiable cousin is at stake, I have thought proper to  
leave

\* A Schebandad, a chief of commerce.

leave her at liberty to make choice of one of you; and the one of the three whom she shall prefer may depend upon our approbation and consent.

These three brothers could not oppose this reasonable proposal; and the Schebandad was commissioned to communicate it to his granddaughter. Vafumé was much embarrassed: "Father," said she, "I love my three cousins with an equal affection, and would be extremely sorry to disoblige any of them. However, since you require me to make a choice, and as it is almost a matter of indifference to me which of them I obtain, I have thought of a method of determining the point. My cousins are endowed with excellent abilities; and I will take that one of the three for my husband who shall relate the most agreeable story: For, if his merit be equal in other respects, I believe the man of the best understanding is the best calculated to promote the happiness of his wife." I shall go and inform them of your proposal, replied the Schebandad; and, as they will not have had time to prepare themselves, you will be the better able to judge of the resources of their imagination. I know their talents; besides, the reward they have in view will give them courage to attempt every thing; and, be-



fore the transports of expectation, every difficulty will vanish.

The Schebandad having acquainted the young men, soon returned to Vafumé, followed by her father and the three lovers. The whole company took their seats, and the contest was ready to begin. The oldest had already begun his story, when he was interrupted by the beautiful Indian. "My amiable cousins," said she, "first of all, you must permit me to bring hither one extremely capable of directing my judgment. Dara! said she, addressing herself to a slave, go and acquaint my good Nané, that I expect her here. It is my nurse, continued she. It is to the pretty stories she formerly told me, that I owe a great part of my instruction; and none of you will be able to prejudice or corrupt this judge, for she is blind. Thus her decision must be in favour of real merit."

Come forward, good nurse, said she to Nané as she entered; cause them to conduct you to me, and prepare yourself to listen with attention. My father is here with a goodly company, who are going to tell you stories; be seated on my sofa. Upon this Nané, groping her way, sat down at Vafumé's side, whom she recognised by her voice; and he who proposed to speak first thus began his story.

*The*

*The Lover of the Stars; or the Story of Cabil-  
Hafen.*

**D**ALHUC, a potter in Bagdad, had been pretty successful in his business: Seventeen years after his marriage, his wife, whom sorrow had rendered infirm, died, leaving him a son of sixteen years of age.

From that time, the potter frequented the house of Narilha, a widow, much younger than himself. This woman was by profession a seller of cosmetics, which preserved the freshness of the complexion and skin, and appeared to perpetuate youth. Her artificial compositions had procured her admittance into the innermost apartments of the caliph's palace, and of the principal harems in the capital. But her fame was not of long duration; after the splendour of a fleeting charm, some of her customers observed their attractions vanish too soon: Time imprinted his wrinkles on their artificial countenances; and our widow, finding her credit diminish, determined to appropriate the little fortune of her friend the potter, by becoming his wife.

Dalhuc was already too much captivated to refuse this proposal; and, thus in virtue of for-

mer claims, and of the contract which was signed in presence of the Cadi, the seller of cosmetics was established as the absolute mistress of his house.

Narilha had a son of the same age with that of Dalhuc; he was one of the most dull and stupid children in Bagdad; but he was not the less, on that account, the beloved idol of his mother. This foolish and rude creature, whose name was Badur, emboldened by the partiality of Dalhuc for his mother, fixed a quarrel on his step-father's son, who, forgetting his natural gentleness, revenged his injurious treatment by beating him soundly: The enraged mother banished her husband's child from the house; and this unfortunate wretch, almost naked, was obliged to take refuge in the house of one of his mother's brothers. Narilha, delivered from this troublesome spy, and flattering herself that she could bring the little knowledge of business which was left her to some good account, exerted it in purchasing a garden without the city, and set up a fruit-shop, of which the caliph afterwards became a customer, by the interest of the purveyor of the palace.

The poor Dalhuc, driven from his father's house, had arrived, in the most disconsolate condition, at the house of his uncle Cassanak, who was one of the most honest and industrious men in Bagdad;

Bagdad; but his family was too large for his bearing himself of all the service to his nephew that he could have wished. Enraged at the outrage Dalhuc had suffered, he determined to request one of his friends, a geomancer, to assist him, and persuaded him to espouse his quarrel very warmly. "What vengeance would you wish to take on your nephew's step-mother?" asked the learned man.

"I wish to humble this arrogant woman," replied Cassanak, "to tear from her the money of which she has deprived Dalhuc, and to lay it out in establishing my nephew. This young man had been promised to the only daughter of a wealthy barber. He was really attached to her, and believed the flame was mutual. But Narilha has produced a change in his father's intentions, and this young lady is at present designed for Badur. I should wish, said Cassanak, to show her to her husband in her true character."

"I shall answer for the complete success of your wishes," replied the geomancer, "provided you will take upon you the execution of the plan I am to lay down. Go immediately, and, in the neighbourhood of the palace, hire a shop, the most commodious you can find for the display of fruit; and, when the bargain shall be made, return

return hither, and you shall find your business prepared.

Cassanak, delighted with the opportunity of avenging himself on Nariha, yielded the most ready obedience; he hired a shop, gave an earnest, and returned. "You have been very expeditious," said the geomancer; "nor have I been quite idle; and I now put it in your power to succeed in all your designs. Here, in the first place, is an Armenian robe, and a sharp pointed cap; take also this paper; it contains a full detail of instructions respecting the operations you must carry forwards to-morrow morning. Study well the words which you must pronounce aloud; and, whatever miracle you may need, command it confidently. I have armed you well, and will aid your intentions to the very utmost of my power. To-morrow, as soon as you shall have left your house, let your nephew repair to the shop which you have hired; but let him take care not to appear surprised at what he shall see there, lest he should attract the attention of the curious, whom he must carefully shun.

Cassanak returned home, shut himself up in his closet, and, in the silence of retirement, studied the part he was to act. He impatiently waited the return of morning; and, as soon as it appeared, he equipped himself in the magical robe, and sharp pointed cap; and, after having  
sent

sent Dalhuk to his station, went himself to Narilha's house. He entered her shop, and found the fruits displayed in it with great skill. Upon his remarking, with some degree of surprise, that they were extremely beautiful, "Taste them," said the fruit-woman; "they are indeed pretty to the eye, but they are much better to the taste." Cassanak was easily persuaded, and in reality found that she was right. I was laying my account, madam, with being obliged to travel to Damas in search of fruit; if we can manage it so, as that I can be accommodated here, I shall certainly spare myself the fatigue of the journey.—Not that I mean to commend my fruit, Sir, replied Narilha, but in reality the caliph's gardens produce nothing half so savoury; indeed all that you see is partly destined for his table, and those of his house; but, to oblige such a man as you, I will take away some part of them.—Madam, I am flattered with your politeness, and am certain you will have no cause to repent of the kindness you have shown me.—But, in reality these fruits are fit for angels: Give me two of these pomegranates, and tell me the price of them. Narilha was very much surprised, that, after being so lavish in her praises, he wanted only pomegranates, and determined to revenge herself upon him, by asking an exorbitant price for them.

The



The Armenian paid it immediately, and added, "If your fruit is relished, I hope to conclude a more important bargain with you." Saying this, he placed himself in the middle of the shop, and throwing the pomegranates with all his force into the air, they immediately disappeared; which drew an exclamation of surprise from Narilha and her son. The pretended Armenian then drew from his pocket a small silver tube, in which he seemed to articulate a few words in a very low tone. A moment after, he applied to his ear a horn of the same metal, pretending to listen to something that was said to him; then shutting up his instruments, and assuming an air of satisfaction, "Madam," said he, "a trial of your fruit has been made, and it has been found delicious; I have received orders to carry off immediately all that remains. The labour will not be tedious, for people have been sent to assist me: There is my purse; take as much money as you think proper for the payment of your fruit." The sight of the gold awakened the covetousness and avarice of Narilha; she could have taken the whole purse very willingly, but limited herself to thirty sequins, for the payment of what was really worth five or six.

The Armenian was so far from being dissatisfied with this, that he did not even pay any  
attention

attention to it ; but immediately took possession of his fruit, and threw a melon with the right, and an apple with the left, till, in a short time, all the fruit in the shop was in motion, and, flying off as if it had had wings, entirely disappeared. Badur and Narilha looked very earnestly at this strange removal of their fruit.—“ How, whither, and by whom have you dispatched all this fruit !” said she to the Armenian.—“ Madam,” replied he, “ I am the chief caterer for the stars, in which it is constantly either too hot, or too cold, too moist, or too dry, so that nothing comes to perfect maturity. I descended upon the earth, with a view to get provisions for them, and will frankly confess, that, in consequence of the great fame of the fruits at Damas, I was on my way to that city, when I accidentally passed before your shop: The appearance of your fruits attracted my attention ; their flavour increased my surprise ; and their taste completed my delight. I sent two of them for a trial, and immediately received an order to bring away the whole. If to-morrow, and the day following, you are as well provided, you will be able to sell every thing in your shop, and you will become the fruit-woman of the skies.”

Narilha rubbed her eyes, uncertain whether she was awake or in a dream, upon hearing such agreeable

agreeable information. The foolish Badur, with his mouth half open, stared by turns at his mother, at the Armenian, and at the ceiling.—“There’s a very pretty young man, madam,” said the mischievous provider; “he must be your brother: He bears a great resemblance to you.”—“No, Sir, he is my son,” replied the fruit-woman.—“What! at your age, have you so big a son as that? that is incredible. You must think of getting him married.”—“I am thinking of it, Sir: He is already engaged to the daughter of a rich barber, one of our friends.”—“A barber! a barber! and a rich barber! There are many wonders in heaven, but this exceeds them all; were he not so silent, the miracle would be complete. Do you know, madam, that the mere sale of your fruit for one year might entitle you to ask the daughter of a vizir for your son? yet this should be only your last resource. We have daughters above to marry, who would look upon a connection with you as a real blessing.”—“How, Sir! Do they marry above?”—“Do they marry! Do you think then that heaven was peopled without marriage? Every thing which you see sparkle there has a father and mother. How could new stars be discovered every day, unless there were some born? Whence hath the milky way its name, but because it is the habitation

bitation of nurses. Let me alone, madam, I have prospects for your son. I wish to marry him to the youngest, most fresh, and most brilliant of our beauties."—"Ah! who is she?"—"She is the Star of the Morning.—She is assuredly brilliant: She is also fresh, for she never travels but in the night; but, as to her being young, Sir, that is impossible, for I have known her ever since I have been in the world, and the very first time I observed her she was fully round."—"She whom you knew, madam, went off some years ago; but you women of the earth suffer the stars to fly off without ever asking whether they go; it is also true that there are so many of them that one does not give themselves any trouble about such as are wanting.—But, seriously speaking, would you wish your son to become the husband of the most beautiful of the stars."—"Ah! Sir, if that could possibly be brought about, I should be delighted with it. Would he likewise shine in the firmament?"—"I shall answer for his not being a dark body there; but regularly every day his mistress comes near the earth, and, if the affair pleases you, we will see if it is possible to settle it. Shut the door of your shop, and cause a pail full of water to be brought into the middle of the store-house."

The directions of the Armenian were followed,  
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ed, and the pail brought to the place appointed. "Come near, young man," said he to Badur, "look at yourself in this water, you will find yourself very pretty in it. Endeavour to assume a pleased air, that your countenance may be rendered more agreeable.—Good! This is perfectly charming.—You may now withdraw." As soon as Badur had quitted his position, the Armenian took up the pail, and threw its contents into the air, without one drop falling back into the room. "What are you doing, Sir?" said Narilha, uneasy at first at an event which threatened to deluge her store-house, and then extremely surprised at seeing the whole water in the pail entirely disappear. "I am sending," said he, "your son's picture to the most beautiful of the stars. Let us sit down, we shall learn in a moment what effect it has upon her."

During this interval, the Armenian introduced some indifferent conversation; then all at once he arose, placed himself in the middle of the room, applied his tube to his mouth, and his horn to his ear, and, assuming a contented air, "Your son, madam, is infinitely agreeable! He is destined to a very high fortune; but he must yield to my fancy, as I know the taste of our ladies. Badur has a ruddy and animated complexion,

plexion, the beauty of which he must not disguise under that tufted beard, which reaches almost to his eye-brows; and the lively and piercing looks of his eyes would be much more charming were they not concealed by his long eye-brows. These must be cut away, and the size of his beard diminished. Let him be shaven to the bottom of the under lip; and, with this precaution, I promise him infallible success in his amours. To-morrow morning, however, I shall be more certain than I am at present; in the mean time, I wish your son to display a little gallantry with his mistress: He must, therefore, be provided with a nose-gay, composed of the most beautiful flowers; and you, madam, take care to have your shop as well stored to-morrow as it was to-day; here are pledges for the sale which I promise you. The only thing I exact of you is secrecy concerning the trade we are in future to carry on together; for the smallest indiscretion might mar your fortune. The stars have already too much intercourse with men, who call upon their interference in all their petty concerns. This is extremely disagreeable to the heavenly bodies. You see, Madam, that I speak frankly to you. Farewell; some business calls me hence; to-morrow I shall be here very early." Upon this Cassanak made a bow, and withdrew.

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I should think myself in a dream, said Narrilha to her son, did I not hold in my hand these thirty sequins, which appear to me to be of sufficient weight, and to be good gold.—“Mother,” said Badur, “why must I go immediately to have myself shaved? — Why so suddenly! The stars, I believe, do not see any thing during the day; and it will be much better that you be fresh shaved to-morrow morning.—But, in truth, added Narrilha, I am not recovered from our adventure; and it must be acknowledged this Armenian must be a very honest man; for, with the same address with which he carried off our fruits, he might have dispensed with paying for them so cheerfully, and at so high a price. As for you, friend, instead of going to have yourself shaven, you ought to go in search of some baskets of good fruit, in order to deck our shop, that the caliph’s provider may not go away from us empty-handed; for great profits never ought to make us despise small ones.” Just as she was saying this, the caterer entered.

“How now!” said he, “I wanted all your fruit to-day, and I see none!”—“Have patience a moment, Sir, our asses are not yet arrived; Badur is gone to meet them; and, if you, Sir, have not time to stay, you may return to the palace, whither all that you need shall

shall be sent. The provider replied, that he did not wish the goods to be sent to him; that he wished to choose them himself; and could by no means depend upon the slow return of her asses. When he had said this, he turned his back and departed. Nariha, piqued with the sharpness of this speech, thought her vanity too much humbled; and it appeared to her very extraordinary, and very improper, that the fruit-woman of the stars should be treated with so little ceremony. "You see," said she, "how the slaves of great people forget themselves: Ah! when we shall have made our fortune, I will convince these creatures of their insignificance."

Other providers made their appearance: "What!" said they, one after another, "one finds nothing now in your shop? When people give up trade, they generally give intimation of it."—"No," replied she, "I have nothing here; and such rude fellows as you never will find any thing in my shop. You seem as if you spoke to persons whom you supported by your charity."—"Assuredly," said they as they went out, "you are not in the way of making a fortune."

As the fruit which had been carried off from Nariha's shop had arranged itself in that of Dalhuc's son, the providers found in it wherewith

to recompence their unsuccessful application at the fruit-woman's house. Cassanak, after having laid aside his Armenian habit, had come to preside over his nephew's first attempt in trade; in short, every thing in his shop was carried off at any price; the multitude of purchasers had decided the value of the goods.

Every body was surpris'd how Dalhuc could so suddenly furnish a shop with such an excellent assortment of fruit. "I am indebted for this favour," said he, "to my uncle's kindness."—"And this, doubtless," replied one of the providers, "is what hath made your step-mother mad; nothing is to be found with her but insolence and pride: Keep your trade always on as good a footing, and we will deal with none but you."

While Dalhuc carried on his business with considerable success, his stepmother shut up her sequins very carefully in a corner unknown to all the world; she hoped in time to accumulate a treasure which would render her independent of her neighbours. "Take great care," said she to Badur, "that you don't mention to my husband the handsome bargain we have concluded, and those which we have in prospect. He is a man who cannot keep a secret; he is too much addicted to sloth and drunkenness; he would indulge himself anew in his vices;

vices; and, by gaining much, we should become poorer than ever. Besides, he has a curious prying turn; and, if we were to speak to him of the man who is to return to-morrow, he would remain at home in order to wait for him, and all would be discovered: We need him to gather fruits, if we wish to sell them; so that he must be advised to set out somewhat earlier than usual. As for you, you would do well to go to the suburbs, and lay out this sequin which I give you in purchasing two loads more of fruit; for I feel a happy presage that announces a considerable sale for to-morrow; besides, you need a nosegay.

Badur departed, in obedience to his mother. Cassanak had been to wait upon his friend the geomancer, to give him an account of the operation of the day; and they concerted together the plan of next day's proceedings.

As soon as day appeared, Badur, furnished with an enormous nosegay, ran to the house of the barber, who was to have been his father-in-law, in order to have his beard and his eyebrows cut after the fashion of the stars. He fell into the hands of the apprentices, who, after hearing the very extraordinary manner in which the simple Badur wished to be shaved, asked him the reason of it: "What does it signify to you!" said he to them, "do as I bid you;

I must obey my mother, who wishes me to become the mirror of the stars!" The young people could not suppress their laughter; and their noise attracted the passengers, who were all eager to become acquainted with the mirror of the stars. When the son of Nariha was satisfied with the manner in which they had cut his beard and eye-brows, he took up his large nosegay, and was preparing to depart. "Ah! whither are you carrying that bunch of flowers?" said the young people; "Did not you bring it for our master's daughter? Should not you leave it here?"—"No; I am carrying it to my mother."—"Has your mother changed her trade? Is she become a seller of flowers?"—"It is a present we intend to make."—"And to whom, pray? This is not the feast of the Haraphat, or you have as much there as would cover the heifers, which, on that occasion, are offered up in sacrifice."—"Fine flowers for cows truly!" said the impatient Badur; "my mother knows better how to bestow her presents." Saying this, he made his escape from the shop. *(qadi, 66)*

A few moments after, the barber returned home, and they related to him the singular appearance which Badur had made: "There is," says he, "a bad report spread respecting his mother. For my own part, I think these  
people

people are bewitched ; my daughter is not suited to him ; I will go and give him up his promise, and withdraw mine."

Badur, believing himself as fine as the star he wished to conquer, returned to his mother's shop, where he found her, freed from her husband, proud of the beauty of her fruit, and admiring the beautiful order in which she had arranged them. Nothing was wanting but a purchaser ; and the Armenian appeared.—" Let us make haste, madam," said he to her, " I have some business ; for how much will you sell all that I see ?"—" Good fruit is scarce," replied Narilha, " and these are most admirably chosen ; there is not a single bad one among them. There are a fourth more than there was yesterday, and, consequently, you must give me forty sequins for them."—" That is a large sum," replied Cassanak ; " but I must fulfil the engagements I came under ; and to-morrow you will certainly be more reasonable : In the mean time there are your forty sequins."

As soon as the money was told, the purchaser, as he had done the day before, took one of each sort of fruit, threw it into the air, and it disappeared.—Invisible hands were waiting the signal to seize all that was in the shop, and in a moment it was left empty ; even the leaves, with  
which



which she decked the fruit, were conveyed to Dalhuc's shop. This miracle being performed, the Armenian directed his attention to the foolish Badur, who, decked out in a new dress, freed from three fourths of his eye-brows, and with nothing but a small tuft of beard upon the point of his chin, was watching the looks of his new patron. "This is very well, friend!" said Cassanak to him; "you are dressed to a miracle; you are furnished with a nosegay I hope?—I have not failed to supply myself with that," replied Badur, showing it to him—"There are a great deal too many flowers there! You must pick out the most beautiful, the freshest, and the most odoriferous.—What you have just now taken away is quite sufficient for us; tie them together, and give them to me." The Armenian took the nosegay, threw it into the air, and it appeared to follow the same road as the fruit had done. Ah! continued he, did you know the language of the stars, I could, by means of my tube and horn, procure you a charming conversation: But the pronunciation of this language is extremely difficult, on account of its having no vowels, and you will one day have an excellent master, who will teach you it much more easily than I can do. Till this shall happen, however, and that you may carry on your courtship, you must, if you please, send to your mistress

trials a more exact and agreeable picture of yourself than was taken yesterday. It was overshadowed by a thick beard, and two bushy eye-brows. To-day the beauty of your features is unclouded; cause another pail full of water to be brought."

Badur obeyed this order without a moment's hesitation; and, as soon as the pail was in the middle of the store-house, he stooped down as near the water as he possibly could, in order that the features of his countenance might make a more lively impression; but two invisible hands, laying hold of his beard, drew down his head to the bottom of the water. His whole body would have been dragged in, had not his hands, which were firmly supported on the brim of the pail, resisted the effort. The mother set up a terrible shriek, and Badur started up; the Armenian laughed with all his might. "Delightful toying!" exclaimed he, "you know not the art of our ladies! Your son was drawn to the bottom of the pail that they might snatch a kiss from him: Does not his countenance, madam, appear covered with pearls? Do not his lips seem perfumed with amber? Come, child, said he to Badur, stoop down again towards the place where you can meet with nothing but caresses; present a smiling countenance, and amorous looks. As one would wish at present to

to preserve your likeness, one must take care to do nothing which might disturb its expression." Yes, my son, added Narilha, passing her hand before his countenance, this gentleman is in the right; they have bestowed caresses on you which you have not perceived; and have left upon your lips the perfume of the rose, and of the violet: Come, friend, you must yield to this pleasantry of these celestial ladies, and appear desirous to please them; go, and admire yourself in the water, and laugh most heartily, that you may show you are pleased. The weak fool, in obedience to his mother, placed himself on his knees before the pail, presented his face to the mirror in which it was to be represented, and, laughing, in exact imitation of the cry of a goat—Very well! excellently! exclaimed Cassanak; go on; you see they want no longer to draw you to the water. Laugh still much louder. Independent of all the particular graces you display, you give a most favourable idea of the cheerfulness of your temper. Badur, by new bursts of laughter, quite undid all he had set up before; the noise was heard in the street, and attracted the Caliph's provider, who knocked very smartly at the door. Narilha opened it, and the provider entered, while her son raised himself very briskly. "What, madam," said he, "do you not sell fruit now? Have you made

made

made a stable of your house? There is the watering pail already in the middle. I have heard, however, that you have got home a great deal of fruit; Could I have some of it?—You do not rise early enough in the morning, replied Narilha, with some tartness; one who gives a better price hath got before you; and my house can only have the appearance of a stable when you are in it.—These are very insolent speeches! replied the provider; Are you ignorant that I belong to the Caliph?—Are you ignorant that my shop is an open market, that I am bound to serve the public, and that he who comes too late has himself to blame?—Farewel, madam fruit-seller! They were in the right in calling you a fool; never shall I enter your shop again. Farewel master provider! If you keep your word, they will have been in the right to call you wise.—I am going, madam fruit-seller; they shall hear of you in the palace.—Go, master provider, I will take care they shall hear of you also.

The provider went out in a rage. Narilha was in a passion likewise; and the Armenian endeavoured to calm her. “Forget this insolent fellow, madam; I promise you you shall no more need to transact business with him; let us finish what we have begun; persuade your son to present his figure once more to the pail,

and he will do well to make less noise, that he may not attract other troublesome people. Badur put himself in the posture required; and, as soon as the Armenian thought the portrait complete, he sent it to the star of the morning, by the same conveyance which he had made use of for the former one. Having afterwards applied his tube and his horn, he thus spoke to Narilha: "Your son is very happy madam; his fortune is to be envied; but, if he ascends on high, he must be very wise, and must not abuse his advantages. To-morrow, perhaps, I shall tell you more agreeable things; and remember always to provide me as good fruit as I have got to-day, and in abundance." Saying this, he departed. "Do you understand Badur?" said Narilha to her son; you must go and purchase fruit, for our garden, large as it is, would not supply us; bring at the same time a nosegay for your mistress, to whom I wish to send it to-morrow, as a present from myself."

Cassanak had gone to his nephew's house to put off his robe and his cap, and found him delivering fruit to the caliph's provider, to those of the vizir, and of the principal emirs: But, as he did not find himself any longer necessary there, he hastened to his friend the geomancer. "This is all that remains for you to perform," said the learned man to him; your nephew's  
shop

shop is at present well frequented ; but we cannot afford to purchase any more fruit from Narilha, who sells them greatly above their value ; There is one of the finest gardens in all the the environs of Bagdad at present exposed to sale ; you must go immediately, with the money in your hand, and conclude a bargain for it. It will only cost you five hundred sequins, with an old black slave, and four beasts of burden, which will perform great exploits for you. You will find there an excellent gardener, whom it will be proper to keep ; and, as your nephew will no longer be assisted by the invisible hands who both brought and arranged the fruit, you must provide yourself with a slave : And all this must be done immediately.—But where shall I get these sequins ? replied Cassanak, since I am unable to return you those which you have already lent me.—You owe me nothing, replied the geomancer ; the treasure which is to furnish you with six hundred sequins hath already reimbursed me, I mean that of the step-mother. She is possessed of more than twelve hundred pieces of gold, the half of which she has stolen from Dalhuc since he had the misfortune to marry her ; all that belongs to your nephew, and we must teach his father the method of getting the remainder into his possession. The sequins, which you have given this woman by



my hands were first stolen by her, but have since made their escape; for, no sooner had she shut them up in her repository, than they left it, in company with many others, and placed themselves in my coffer. If I chose, not one of them would remain in her concealment; but I only wish to take from it what Dalhuc ought to have given his son to settle him in life. There is the gold, my dear Cassanak; go and conclude your bargain. To morrow, for the last time, you must return to the fruit-woman: It is necessary to keep up the illusion with her and her son till you have concluded your nephew's marriage with the barber's daughter; and all that may be done to morrow, in the manner I shall point out.

While these two friends were taking their measures together, the barber was taking a step extremely favourable to their views. He had come to an explanation with Narilha. "What sort of behaviour is this of Badur?" said he to her; "he has got himself shaved and combed in the most ridiculous manner: Have you made him mad, or have you caused him to be circumcised? He always displays a large nosegay of flowers, but never leaves a single one of them to my daughter: I see him at your feet: Are you become his idol? For he is so stupid, that you may turn him whatever way you please."

please. I will not have a madman for my son-in-law; and should mine, for the want of good sense, stand in need of direction, I expect no woman will interfere with him except his own wife." The barber, uttering these words with that volubility which is peculiar to people of his profession, perceived that Narilha reddened, and was become furious with anger; he therefore thought it a good opportunity for bringing the matter to a conclusion. Do you understand me, Madam? said he, advancing two steps:—Do I understand you? Devil's barber! insolent Jew! if you wish for fools to govern, choose them on your own model. Keep your bastard of a daughter to yourself; my son is not for her: You are people with whom we would blush to have any connection whatever.—You will return me my word of promise, replied the barber, endeavouring to restrain himself; I will be much obliged to you, and shall engage it no more. But it will soon be two years since your husband and son frequented my shop without ever having left a single penny. I must at least have handsome presents for my apprentices.—Ah! Who has refused you your wages and your handsome presents? replied the fruit seller; not a single workman in Bagdad can complain of us. Hold, added she, throwing six sequins with great disdain upon the table, there is for the master barber and his boys; for one could

scarcely pay too dear to get rid of them; get out immediately. At the sight of the gold, the barber opened his eyes very wide. "This woman is evidently mad," said he to himself; "she throws her gold at my head; and, should I think of contradicting her again, she might throw something more deadly at me: Let us be going with it." Saying this, he turned himself very briskly, and hastened out of the shop.

As the barber was returning home, he met Cassanak, who had just taken possession of the garden, and arranged every thing for securing the success of his nephew's business; and, his head being still filled with his adventure, he stops Cassanak: "Have you," says he, "any connection with Dalhuc, your ancient brother-in-law?"—None, since, at the instigation of his wicked wife, he banished from his house my dear nephew, who really deserves the tender affection I feel for him.—"Do you know," added the barber, "that the woman you are speaking of is completely mad."—I have known that for a considerable time; indeed she never was wise; but it is true that she has had a violent fit, which has banished from her shop all the customers whom she had had the address to draw to it: I have availed myself of this for the establishment of my nephew, who will soon, I hope, be in a more flourishing condition than  
of his

his father. At present, he possesses that shop which is in the corner of the square, to which all the customers of Nariha now repair. They appear delighted with my nephew, who is by far the finest young man in Bagdad.—But, if your nephew is obliged to purchase fruits in order to sell them again, he will not make much of the business.—My nephew sells only fruit of his own growth. He is the proprietor of one of the best gardens in our neighborhood; here is the contract of the bargain, and his discharge. This poor young man is very engaging, and has found friends; every person is eager to contribute to his little profits; he wants nothing now but a wife to assist him; for, alone as he is at present, and his business increasing every day, he needs some person to attend to his affairs.—I once observed, said the barber, that he had a liking for my daughter; to whom he was by no means disagreeable, and, for my own part, I loved him sincerely. Dalhuc would have been very well pleased with this match, but his wife would not part with a sequin. You are a father, and you know, as well as I, that our first care is to provide for our children: I am under no engagement; your nephew is established in life; and, if he wishes my daughter's hand, he shall have it.—I accept it for him, replied Cassanak, holding out his hand to the barber.

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To morrow, before noon, I will go to Dalhuc, and communicate our intentions to him; and I have such information to give him as will bring him to agree to all our wishes: I will then bring him with me to the city; we will call on the cadi, as we pass, the ceremony shall be instantly performed, and the nuptials celebrated in the evening. Narilha shall not hear of it till all is over, and her opposition useless.

The barber returned home so full of joy that he could with difficulty restrain himself. The powerful principle of gold had alone determined him to marry his daughter to the stupid Badur; but the husband now proposed appeared to possess superior advantages. He informed his daughter of it, and she felt no difficulty in deciding in favour of her former lover.

While they were settling this marriage, the strangest chimeras were floating in the heads of Narilha and of her son. Both of them were delighted at having entirely broke off the treaty with the barber. Common people! Mere mob! said the mother.—Oh! I am no more of this sort, said Badur; and I really expect they will not now laugh in my face as they formerly did. Then each of them aside indulged their own dreams, according to their capacity.

Ah! said Narilha to herself, though I did  
nothing

nothing but sell every day my own fruit, and that of others, at such a price, I should soon fill my little coffer ! I should be obliged to get a strong-box.—But where would I conceal it ? We will not stay always in this house ; and, besides, we shall have more room. When it shall be perceived in Bagdad that my fruit disappears, without any person in the town having bought it, people must necessarily expect some mystery. I would do well to be silent respecting my good fortune ; but, in spite of me, it will be known that I am fruit-seller general to the skies.—It is a most honourable office ! I shall lodge in a fine palace ; and, in place of displaying my fruit under a tent, and before my door, I will range them in pyramids betwixt the pillars of the peristyle of my palace. Already I see all these fine fruits raised to the roofs.—Oh ! The beautiful view ! The proud pyramids ! Never were more magnificent ones formed, of sapphires, of emeralds, of topazes, or of rubies ! Certainly the caliph will wish to enjoy this spectacle ; he will bring his favourites hither ; and they will consider themselves as extremely happy in receiving from my hand the fruits which were intended for the stars.—No body will be mentioned any where but the fruit-seller of heaven : All those of Damas will become jealous of her ; and then it will be known  
that



that my son has married the morning-star :— And, as the stars have an influence on the lot of every individual, all the grandees of the kingdom will pay their court to me ; perhaps, there may even be kings in the crowd ; for, powerful as they are, they are seldom content with their condition.—I will make my own terms with them ; and, as it would be humiliating for me to remain the wife of a potter, I will procure for him an honourable office.—He has hardly any knowledge ; but, with a little pride, he will make as good a figure as another.—Ah ! in a short time, I must become the wife of an emir.—In my way to the palace, I shall meet this provider who forgot the respect due to me : I will draw up the curtains of my litter, and, with a disdainful look, will punish him for his insolence. He shall know the distance there is betwixt the provider of a caliph and the fruit-seller general of the firmament ; for, even when I shall be the wife of an emir, I will still preserve the custom of heaven ; it is so pleasant to take the money which falls from it.—As to my son, his wife will assuredly make him a prince ; perhaps she may make him king of some place ! He has not much understanding ; but his ministers will have it for him—Such was the strain of Narilha's fancy. “ To morrow,” said Badur, on his part, “ I shall have myself shaved again.”

again, for I am greatly the better.—Here am I, the lover of a star ! But love is certainly something very extraordinary ; for I am in love, yet I don't feel it ; that must necessarily come, however.—But how shall I get near the object of my affection ? Will she descend, or must I ascend to her ? I have seen melons go up into the air ; and, had they been large gourds, it would have been all one !—I will disappear like a gourd. But, my mother told me that I ought to say sweet things to the barber's daughter if I married her : Now, What shall I say to my star !—You are very round, very white, and very brilliant !—I believe this will do pretty well.—In every case, I can consult the Armenian gentleman, who hath spoken to me of a language without vowels ; I will beg of him [to teach me what I ought to say, and to direct my conduct, for he is better acquainted than I with the customs of the stars." Night descended, while Badur was indulging these extravagant ideas ; and the heaven was bespangled with stars, every one more brilliant than another.—Where, then, is mine ? said the ridiculous lover. The more I search, I am the less able to distinguish.—But, since they are said to be fond of good humour, I am going to laugh to them all ; and mine will know that, when I laugh, I do it to please her. With this, he set up forced laughs, and was answered by

by a full chorus of the beasts of burden which Dalhuc had put into the stable. Vastly well, Badur ! said his step-father to him ; you are cheering my poor beasts, who are extremely fatigued ; it will do them good.

But next day was to unravel all these adventures. The fruit-seller, better provided than usual, expected with great impatience the provider of the skies. At length he arrived ; and she sold him the fruit at a higher price, and was more genteelly paid for it than on the former days. She seemed to triumph beforehand in the riches she promised herself, and endeavoured to imitate the airs and graces of high life : The Armenian perceived this, and appeared to be highly amused with it ; but, at the same time, was busy in dispatching the fruit. The foolish Badur attempted to throw some pomegranates into the air, and, observing that they did not fall back again, began to think he had intercourse with heaven, and continued the work till he was all over in a sweat : “ Courage ! Courage my friend ! ” said the Armenian to him ; “ so far as I see, your services are becoming more and more agreeable.” — “ Do you think so ? ” — “ Do I think so ! You are, without suspecting it, the happiest of mortals ; and in a short time you will have a proof of it.” — “ I should be glad to know,

know," said Badur, "how that happiness can be procured; for it appears to me that I could hold my mistress in the hollow of my hand!"—"You are deceived by the distance," replied the Armenian, "she is as large as you."—"But, taking that for granted, she must be all face like the moon."—"No, no: She has arms, hands, legs, and feet, as well as you: It is just as if you saw a young beautiful person during the night with a large glow-worm on the top of her nosegay."—"Ah! I understand; my wife has only to take off her cap to be exactly like another woman; and I have only to put a glow-worm on mine, to become, in my turn, a star."—"Your conjectures respecting the heavens are as just as if you had been there."—"A thought strikes me, however," added Badur; "when I shall be in the air, how shall I walk there?"—"With much greater ease than on the earth," replied the Armenian; "the roads there are far more beaten." Then, turning towards Narilha, "Well, Madam! You see the progress of your son: He has learned more in one moment than the most renowned astrologers who have lost their sight in observing the stars."

Although Narilha was not destitute of understanding, she was nevertheless very ignorant,

rant, and endeavoured to render herself still more so respecting her son. Deceived by the conversation of the Armenian, she allowed herself to be persuaded that Badur had talked very rationally; and flattered herself with the hopes of seeing his understanding unfold very rapidly: In her turn, she wished to express some curiosity respecting the inhabitants of heaven: "Are they well dressed, Sir?" said she to Cassanak.—"Their garments," replied he, "resemble the most agreeable vapours: One would think they were sprinkled with the powder of Thamarena, which, added to the delicious and natural odour of their bodies, gives a sensation, when you approach them, which I cannot better compare than to that of a nosegay composed of roses, jonquils, and blossoms of the orange." "Oh! how fine for me," said Badur; "I am fond of flowers to distraction, and would always have my nose at a nosegay. Ah! when shall I enjoy these delicious perfumes?"—"This very night if you please," replied the Armenian; "go without the city of Bagdad, and lie down in your father's garden; and towards eleven o'clock your mistress is to bathe in the beautiful canal which is formed by the river along your terrace; undress yourself, swim after your charming star, and caress (but very gently, and with great discretion)

cretion) the water in which you see her; for, if you go rudely to work, you may make the glow-worm drop, and the lady will make her escape. Pursue her to the very end of the canal; and, as soon as you shall have reached this, put your foot upon the ground, and you will find her spring upon the sand as nimbly as yourself. As to the rest, my dear Badur, I have no farther instructions to give you. It is sufficient for you to know, that, in order to marry her immediately, you have no need either of a *cadi* or of witnesses, for the ladies of heaven are void of ceremony.”—“ So much money saved!” said Badur; “ this will be as much as I shall spend in getting my beard shaved to-morrow. But who will shew me my star amidst all the rest?”—“ Your gardener: Tell him to shew you the morning-star in the Euphrates, and he will show you it immediately; for it is not in heaven that he must seek for it.” After this, Cassanak took his leave of the mother and son, promising to return next day.

When he had gone out, Nariha, reflecting on what she had just heard, appeared greatly astonished at it; but she was comforted by the gold which she held in her hand, and she went to lock it up in her coffer: In proportion as this was filled, her head grew empty, and her



reason vanished; and she agreed that her son should prosecute his intrigue in the Euphrates.

While, in this manner, they were occupied with the ridiculous means of advancing their fortune, Cassanak had gone to his brother-in-law, whom he found in the garden employed in gathering fruit. He found him prejudiced against his son Il-Dalhuc. But, when he was informed of the excellent establishment which his good behaviour had procured him, when he saw the contract for the garden he had purchased, and his discharge, he was obliged to confess that he had been deceived respecting his son by Narilha. At the same time, he learned that the barber, his old friend, had broken his engagements with his wife, that he was inclined to give his daughter to Il-Dalhuc, and that they only waited for him to draw up the contract: He was delighted with this information; and, entrusting to his gardener the care of gathering the fruit, he departed immediately with Cassanak to the cadî's house.

As they walked along, he learned many other circumstances. He was informed that his wife had a treasure which she concealed from him; that it was the product of what she had stolen from him, and that she still defrauded him every day; that she had, in the space of three days, sold fruit to an Armenian for more  
than

than one hundred and fifty sequins; and that she had fallen out with all the providers in Bagdad, who had fortunately found every thing which they wanted in the shop of Il-Dalhuc, who had drawn all her customers to him, and that therefore there was nothing lost to the family. Consider, my dear Dalhuc, added his brother-in-law, how this woman abuses your confidence! She conceals every thing from you, and oppresses you with labour, in order to accumulate a treasure which she wishes to enjoy alone: I know the place where it is concealed, and we might easily make ourselves masters of it. After that, you must separate from this guilty woman, and divorce her before the cadì: You will find in her concealment four times as much money as will suffice to pay her back the dowry you have received; and, as she pretended to come to you when it was dark, you must also send her away in darkness.

Dalhuc was at first rendered furious against Narilha by these explanations; but it required them all to undeceive him. They arrived at the cadì's house; and from thence they went to the barber's, where the marriage was celebrated with emotions of the purest joy and unalterable happiness.

Meanwhile, however, Narilha was the victim of uneasiness. Night had come on; Ba-

dur had gone to the place of meeting; and Dalhuc was not arrived with his fruit. What could have happened to him? If fruits were wanting to-morrow, how could she provide for the necessities of the stars? At length, at the very moment when the gates of the city were to be shut, Dalhuc's gardener arrived with half a load of fruit, and reported that his master had departed at ten in the morning with a man who came for him. What must Narilha do, who had not even her son with her, whom she might send through Bagdad, to collect at least what fruit remained since the day before? In her own opinion, she was exposed to the total ruin of her fortune. Alas! What a storm is about to burst on poor Dalhuc! "Yes," said she, "at whatever hour he shall return, he must go instantly and procure fruit; if there are none in Bagdad, the gates of which are now shut, I will make him leap over the walls, rather than want a single day's provision for the stars." Night had already completed half her course, when, in the middle of this extravagant woman's agitation, Dalhuc knocked at his door, not like a man who dreaded reproaches for his delay, but, for the first time in his life, as master of his own house. "He is drunk, without any doubt!" said Narilha; but dear shall he pay for his debauch!" At the same time

time she opened the door, pouring out a torrent of abuse. "Drunken wretch!" said she to him, "you would reduce us to misery? What have you been about? Whence come you? Do you thus abandon your wife and your child to indulge in your vices? I will complain to the *cadi*; he shall do me justice on you, you infamous debauchee! Think you then that I will allow you leisure to sleep yourself sober till once the shop be furnished with fruits for to-morrow? I know not what keeps me from breaking your arms and legs." Dalhuc was somewhat sharpened by wine; but he had been taught his lesson so perfectly by Cassanak and the barber, that, armed with a large stick, and determined to repel violence by force, he had nevertheless the presence of mind not to commit any. Mad woman! said he, sit down, and recover your senses. We owe to one another an exact account of our conduct. And here is mine.

"Yesterday I was in my garden, when my good-brother Cassanak came there in search of me, and to inform me that my friend the barber was giving his daughter in marriage to Il-Dalhuc my son; and that I behoved to come immediately for the contract and the nuptials. All this is now done, and I have just left them."—"And hast thou the effrontery to tell me,"

me," replied Narilha, "that thou hast left my business to marry thy idiot of a son to the daughter of an impertinent fellow, who yesterday came here, and insulted both my son and myself?"—"Softly; the barber is a friend of mine, and not more impertinent than another; and, if there be an idiot here, your son is the only person I should suspect of being such."—The coolness and steadiness of Dalhuc so much astonished Narilha, that, tempted to revenge herself for the insult she thought she had received, she felt a desire to use the most violent means; but she had neither weapons nor resolution; her feeble rage was soon converted into despair; she rolled along the ground, wringing her hands, set up dreadful shrieks, and, at last, melted into tears, and swooned away.

Dalhuc had been prepared for this; every thing was indifferent to him, provided the sequins did not escape from his hands, and that they enabled him to rid himself of a woman whom he had found to be false. He did not go to bed, but waited quietly the end of the crisis. The hours passed away, and day appeared: Narilha, somewhat recovered from her swoon, watched the moment of her husband's compassion and weakness, in order to take advantage of it; but she waited for it in vain. Dalhuc, seated opposite to her, and his chin leaning

leaning upon his stick, maintained his tranquillity. "That man," said she within herself, "is very suddenly changed. Cassanak, and the cursed barber, have rendered him inflexible! How shall I avenge myself? How shall I bring back my husband? But, rather, how shall I receive the provider of the stars here, with whom I must speak privately. He only could oblige me; he has such powerful friends, that he could easily rid me of some people who wish to get rid of me! Let me put on the appearance of sweetness, and endeavour to remove my husband from this place. "You must be fatigued, my good friend," said she, with the most honeyed accents, "and I am afraid of your falling ill; go to bed, if you please. As for me, I must put the little fruit we have in as good order as I can."—"And for whom?" said Dalhuc: "I know that you have not a single purchaser in Bagdad; for you have disgusted all your customers."—"There is no great loss," replied she; "I have fallen into the way of selling them to strangers, who pay handsomely;" shewing him, at the same time, five or six sequins, and some small coins. "There is money for you," added she; "the house hath wanted nothing, and my fruits have been sold."

Dalhuc



Dalhuc was not a little surprised to see his wife show this money, as it was the first time she had ever thought of doing so, all which she had received being constantly supposed to have been spent before hand. But he was warned of this, and perceived at once the snare and the fraud. He did not take the sequins, but calmly remained in his seat, looking at Narilha, who, forcing herself to weep, arranged as well as she could the fruits which the gardener had brought. "Are not you going to bed, my dear, you will do yourself ill."—"No," replied he "I have no need of rest."—"But, in that case," said she, "instead of remaining here, you would do better to go and search for an assortment of fruit for us in some garden. I expect a customer whom it is our interest to furnish with the best that can be got; I am not at liberty to tell who this is, but, if you do as I bid you, I will let you know at your return,"—"I would rather learn it from the customer's own mouth, and leave you your secret."—"Shocking fellow!" muttered Narilha; "he will spoil the whole affair: Why had I no more than six sequins left in my pocket? He would have been less obstinate if he had seen thirty or forty. Since you won't," continued she, "I must take the basket myself, and go in quest of fruit."—"No; I don't wish you to go out, you

you will be necessary in assisting me to receive the company who will be here immediately.”—  
 “It is the Armenian whom he expects,” continued she, speaking to herself; “and I will not have time to inform him privately of all that has happened.—But I have a notion that those invisible hands, which serve him so well, are able, if he chooses, to free us from this troublesome fellow who wishes to ruin our fortune.—I am all impatience—Little prevents me from scratching out his eyes!—Let me”—The fury of Narilha, for a long time suppressed, was about to become dangerous; but the sun being already considerably above the horizon, the hour of business was near, when all on a sudden a violent knocking was heard at the door. “Heavens!” said she, “there is the Armenian!” and ran hastily to meet him; but Dalhuc had got the start of her, and opened the door himself.

The man who knocked was dressed in a faragi, and was the cad iwho had drawn up the contract of marriage betwixt Cassanak’s nephew and the barber’s daughter. He was not alone; the uncle Cassanak accompanied him, together with some officers of justice. “You wish Dalhuc,” said the cadi, as he entered, “to divorce your wife? I am come to learn the reasons of it,

it, and, should I judge them sufficiently strong, to give a formal divorce to this purpose."

"Sir!" replied Dalhuc, "I married this woman that she might take care of my family, and assist me in my trade. But, by coming to my house, she has spread confusion and disturbance in it, by raising a noise against my son, whom she has forced, in a state of absolute nakedness, to seek shelter under another roof. I began to sell fruit, which promised to be a lucrative trade: Not contented, however, with keeping back the profits of it, she has, by the most distinguished acts of madness, banished from my shop all those for whom I furnished it, preferring to them a man dropt from the clouds."—"Yes, indeed, fallen from the clouds! He is well able to mount up to them again, and to treat you as a wicked and insolent fellow; and, since I am forced to tell every thing, I will beseech him to avenge my cause; he will not refuse it, and will discover to all the world who he is, and who I am:—"Do you hear her, Sir?" said Dalhuc.—"Yes," replied the Cadi; "her head is absolutely deranged: In this point of view, I shall consider what she has just said to screen her from the rigour of the laws;" and he was beginning to dictate the sentence—"Ah! at the instance of a silly fellow, do you thus treat the fruit-seller general of the stars!" exclaimed

claimed Narilha, her eyes inflamed with anger: "Ah! would the celestial provider were here, or even my son? With the protection of the powerful star of the morning, which he married this last night, I should convince of their insignificance all those who have dared this day to treat me with disrespect."—You hear her, Sir, repeated Dalhuc.—Alas! I do hear her, replied the Cadi; do whatever you have resolved upon; you are but too well authorised; and he dictated the sentence. "*Narilha! protected by the provider of the stars!*" said Dalhuc, "*mother-in-law to the morning star, Be gone, I divorce thee, once, twice, thrice.*" During this time, the bill of divorcement was preparing: Dalhuc signed it, and gave it to the divorced lady, after causing a duplicate of it to be written out. This was a very prudent precaution, for she tore the paper into a thousand pieces. "Now," said she, "Where is my dowry? I must have it. You have two hundred sequins to find for me, otherwise I insist upon having the garden, watered with the sweat of my brow, adjudged to me."—"Now," said Dalhuc, "give me an account of my fruit, which, for these three days, you have sold to a stranger".—There it is, said she, throwing six sequins and some small coins in his face. Cassanak then spoke. You have not given an eighth part of the money

you received. I myself furnished the money, and it amounts to an hundred and forty sequins: The Armenian of Bagdad, to whom I lent them, hath given me his robe and cap in security; and here they are. At this declaration Narilha became speechless; but the arrival of Badur completed her confusion. He came, disfigured by torrents of blood running down, and concealing more than half his face, his throat swelled, and such a suppression of the voice, that it was with difficulty he could be heard; while he cursed the stars with all his heart. "Ah!" said he, "If ever I am in love with them again, may I receive three times as many strokes of the rod, as they have applied to me this night."—What has happened you, friend? asked the Cadi. If any person has beat you, I am ready to do you justice.—Sir,!" said Badur, "punish the stars with the bastinado. There is one of them who should have been my wife; I sent her a nosegay, and my picture in a pail of water, and she made me go to the Euphrates, where it was extremely cold. I lost my footing more than twenty times, marching after her, and was obliged to swim half a league; and, when I thought she was going to land together with me, I had scarcely set my foot upon the sand, when I received some blows with a rod from behind. I turned round, but saw nobody:

The

The strokes were repeated: I turned round again, but to no purpose. The persons who inflicted the strokes were always directly at my back; I therefore fled, and was pursued by them, striking me all the way to the door of the garden. Ah! I love the gold which comes down from them very well; but, he may court their favours who will; I have been in a fever the whole night."

The pride of Narilha was completely mortified by this relation: She perceived that she had been played upon, and now saw herself completely detected. The Cadi had ordered seventy sequins to be told down upon the table, and she found that was all she was to be allowed to take back for her dowry. "At least," said she, "I shall be permitted to carry off my effects?"—Yes, replied the Cadi; one of my officers will accompany you, together with Dalhuc and Cassanak. When Narilha perceived that it was impossible for her to carry away her little concealment, she thought of depriving Dalhuc of it; and collected all her effects, without once looking towards the place where her gold was concealed. "Sir," said she, after this, to the cadi, "when I was Dalhuc's wife, it was my duty to obey him; but, now that I am divorced, I am reinstated in my rights. He had forbid me to mention his having found a treasure



in an old iron-pot, which is still to be found in the place where it had been buried. This deposit belongs to the commander of the faithful, and my religious principles do not allow me to dissemble the theft which was intended: Be so good as follow me, Sir, and you may cause it be carried off."—"The caliph already knows of this treasure," replied the cadi, and thinks it right that Dalhuc should take possession of it, as what was in reality stolen from him." Narilha was rendered entirely frantic by this reply: In this situation, she might become extremely dangerous; and, as she was preparing to go out, "Where are you going?" said the cadi; "you have need of medicines, and shall be conducted with your son to a place where every thing that is necessary will be administered to you." Upon this, the retinue of the cadi dragged her out of the house, together with her son; and Dalhue was left alone with Cassanak, on whom he bestowed new expressions of his gratitude.

"This," said Cabil-Hafen, as he here ended his story, is all that I have learned of the history of this family."

THE beautiful Vafumé had never ceased to smile during the whole of this recital; the good

Nané

Nané had, at different times, burst out into violent fits of laughter; the Schebandad and Vafumé's father had appeared pleased; and the rivals of him who related the tale had given signs of uneasiness; all waited, in silence, the approbation of Vafumé, when the Schebandad thus addressed her: "My dear daughter!" said he, "this story appeared to amuse you.—" "Yes, father," every body seemed to be pleased with it, and especially my nurse laughed heartily.—"Much less would have made me laugh, replied Nané. I have listened attentively, I have retained a great many circumstances, and am in good hopes that this story will increase my little collection: But I doubt I shall not be able to deliver it from my memory in as agreeable a manner as it has entered it."—Nay, my dear Nané, on the contrary, I am persuaded that you will do it great justice in the telling; but another is preparing for us, which will perhaps make you forget it.—It must possess a great many excellencies then, said Nané: Let us listen, for I am impatient to hear it begun. The nurse was silent; and the second of the three cousins, availing himself of the attention which was paid to him, began his story.

*The Prowess and Death of Captain Tranchemont,  
and of his brave Companions. Dobil Hasen's Story.*

CAPTAIN TRANCHEMONT, after having rambled over a great many countries, and a great part of the world, found himself in Egypt, in the confines of the mountainous part of that kingdom : his excessive voracity could scarcely be gratified; and the horror with which he inspired every body, removed from him every thing necessary for the supply of his wants.

As he was one day traversing a desert, he was accidentally led into the cave of a dervise : " Holy man !" said he to him, " you see before you a warrior, who is dying for want of food, have not you some hundreds of nuts to break ?" --- " The rats have excellent teeth, replied the dervise, without rising from his seat, and continuing to meditate on his book ; they have eat all the nuts which I received from the charity of the faithful, and have left me nothing but the shells. The only provision I have remaining is that biscuit of the Nile which you see before my door : " And, at the same time, pointed to a stone six feet long, and about three feet high.

" Do you eat that ? replied Tranchemont : Zooks ! you are not delicate in your taste ! I know this pastry, the pyramids of Egypt are built of it,

it, and I can eat at your expence. This morsel would be of hard digestion to any other stomachs than ours; suffer me to cut a slice of it." At the same time he drew his sabre, and with one stroke cut off a slice as thick as three leaves of the palm-tree joined together. He then broke it into small morsels, chewed it betwixt his teeth, and swallowed it. "What a sabre! What arms! What teeth! said the recluse to himself; my furniture is pretty solid; yet this man could unfurnish my cave at four meals; I must make a friend of him! Sir! said he, I admire at once the strength and dexterity of your arm; and find you possess a very extraordinary talent. I am desirous to become acquainted with you, and hope you will not judge me unworthy of that honour: Adventurers are, in general, suspected; but, with respect to a man like you, I ought to have neither secrets nor artifice; enter with me into the innermost apartment of my cave, there I have in reserve some cheeses of goats milk, and some cakes, which I will find a real pleasure in sharing with you; come, we will eat at our leisure, and converse with freedom."

"Most willingly," replied Tranchemont, "I love people of your way of life. I have known more than one of them, who had not spent all their lives in muttering upon books; and, with  
cup

cup in hand, I will willingly do penance with you for my past faults."—"I have neither cups nor goblets," said the dervise; "I use nothing but a pitcher"—"And I would rather excuse the pitcher than want the wine." "Wine! exclaimed the recluse; wine from a dervise! You make the hair of my beard stand on end! Consider that I have retired to this place to lead the life of a penitent: I drink nothing but pure water mixed with a little honey, and of this I compose a very agreeable drink."

The captain shook his head; but he must accommodate himself to his situation. He assisted his landlord in placing the cheeses and cakes, piled upon one another, on a table made of a large stone. There were provisions sufficient for eight persons; yet the two guests found no superfluity. They were seated on sofas of the same materials with the table, having each at his side an enormous pitcher full of water and honey; and the repast began.

After the dervise had eaten the first cheese, without even taking off the crust, "Brother," said he, "let us drink:" he then lifted up his pitcher, and drank it off at one draught: "Here is your health," said he to Tranchemont, who looked at him with astonishment. "Doubtless," replied the captain before he drank, "you must have been empty down to the toes to have

have been able to drain that pitcher without taking time to breathe ; if you had, like me, a stomach paved with stones, there would run through your body a river in proper style."—  
 " Alas, brother !" said the dervise, " you see me justly punished. It is for having drank too much that I am reduced to this penitential life ; at present I quench my thirst, but never commit any excess. You have astonished me with cutting and scratching my biscuit ; I will surprise you, in my turn, with the relation of my history.

" My name is Pretaboire (†). Had water not appeared to me very insipid when I lived in the world, I would have drained the rivers ; and it would have been wrong to have given me the sea, for the favouriness of the liquor would have assisted me in drinking it dry. One day, (I was then in Georgia, at a man's house who had generously offered me an asylum), the vintage was finished, and he had shut up the product of his. Unfortunately my bed was placed too near the deposit. I was suddenly awakened by a flavour so agreeable, that I could not resist the temptation of approaching the vessels from which it was exhaled ; I ventured to taste this beverage, and

† *Pretaboire*, a name significant of an inclination to drinking.



and its charm operated so powerfully upon me, that, during the night, I emptied ten arobes (†), which were the whole product of the vintage. But they seemed to me to be no more than ten. My landlord arrived in the mean time, and abused me for a drunkard, and I, hurt by this reproach, put him to death. Grieved afterwards at this folly of passion, I assumed the habit of a dervise, and resolved to drink nothing but honey and water. In consequence of this resolution, wandering from one retreat to another, seeking always the most solitary, I have at last settled in this abode, where I spend my leisure hours in gathering medicinal herbs, and studying the stars."

"My good saint!" replied Tranchemont, "since from a drunkard you are become an astrologer, I must inform you of my quarrel with the stars. I wish for some little dispute with mine; and would be very glad that you would put me within reach of giving it, and one of its companions, some blows with the flat side of my sabre, to correct them for their caprices respecting me."

"My name is Tranchemont; and I was born in the capital of Circassia. According to the report of an astrologer, who was one of my father's

† *Arobes*, a measure which contains twenty-five pints.

ther's good friends, on the day of my birth, two stars, loaded with good and bad influences, undertook a journey; the least of the two being well provided, travelled foremost. Three women had been delivered that very day, each of a male-child; they inhabited three of the principal buildings which form the corner of the street that leads to the king's palace: "Let us hasten thither," said they, "and drop, in favour of these new-born infants, some of the booty with which we are loaded." As they travelled along, the foremost star grazed upon my mother's house, at the very moment of my birth; and this event stopped it for an instant.—"I can go no farther," said it; "my burden has become oppressive to me, I must drop it here;" and it was directly over me. I cannot tell you all that dropped from its hands at that moment: It has proved a burden which I sometimes carry with great impatience, and by which others are often disturbed; it has rendered me the strongest, but the least hardy of all men; I am doomed to have nothing, and to live continually on plunder; nothing can resist my sabre but the feebleness of man alone, so that I never attack him but with my fists; and you may well judge that I do not want one. These, my good dervise, were the favours which were showered down on my cradle; the star which followed

followed mine was obliged to drop the influences which were destined for me upon a neighbouring hotel."—"And what did it let fall there, pray?"—"A crown: Thus you see, and without vanity I can say, I was only a door from obtaining a throne; the astrologer said to my father, that this happened through fatality; for my part, I suppose there was a good deal of caprice in it; for my brilliant protectress might easily have carried her favours one door lower. By Mahomet! Do you know that I am enraged at it, my good saint, and that I have already employed many methods in order to belie my nativity.

"I have assembled armies; I have commanded them well, and fought still better; but my soldiers proved mere cowards: There were always too many to eat, and nobody to fight. One day I entered a city, without perceiving that I was not followed by my men: I cut in pieces every one that opposed my passage, and pursued and murdered all that attempted to fly. Where it was difficult to carry the sword, there I carried the flames, and I pillaged the whole city: My army thought me lost; and, depending no more upon me, was seized with a dreadful panic, and took to flight. What happened then? As I had laid waste the country, had given quarter to none, and as my army

army was dispersed, though I was become a king by the vigour of my arm, and the cutting of my sabre, yet in reality I reigned over nothing.—“How!” said Pretaboire; “Had you exterminated even the women?”—“By Mahomet! I love the women to distraction; but when they saw me, they cried as if one had flead them; they fled from me, and threw stones at me from the top of the terraces; they excited their husbands, and let out their dogs upon me. I have had my shield and buckler bent in ten places, and the calf of my leg carried off by a mastiff: I love women, but not when they are angry; for then, old or young, ugly or beautiful, I crush as many of them to pieces as I can find; I spare nothing that resists me.”—“Your blood is a little too hot, my general,” resumed the dervise, “you ought, like me, to drink nothing but honey and water.”—“By Mahomet!” exclaimed Tranchemont, “your honey and water increases, instead of quenching my thirst. My malignant star would triumph if it beheld me reduced to that: Let us talk of correcting it, if it is possible. If I could ascend on high, I would teach it to be reasonable; but cannot you, who are an astrologer, by the help of your machines, place me within reach of doing myself justice?”

There is another way of avenging yourself, said Pretaboire; you may play your star nearly the same trick that I played mine. Had it not determined that I should be a vagabond and a rogue? Had it not condemned me to drink like a hole in the sand? You see what I have done; I have retired from the world, I drink honey and water, but sparingly; and, in spite of my star, I possess some worth. But, as you are a foldier, you must follow a different plan, In order to avoid the inconveniencies which seem necessarily connected with your actions, you must endeavour to be a general without an army; and to take possession of a strong city, which hath neither gates, nor ditches, nor walls; so as, that the difficulty you will meet with, in surmounting these obstacles, may not inspire you with so much rage as to make you destroy every thing.

Stop a moment, my dear saint! said Tranchemont: Do you know that, in complying with your proposal, I would be exposed to the danger of losing my life? Are you a fool? Or are you so profound that it is impossible to understand you? What is a general without an army? And where are strong places to be found, having neither ditches nor walls?

A general without an army! replied Pretaboire; to-morrow at the latest, Captain Tranchemont

chemont will be so, who, having neither soldiers nor baggage, will be able to take the field, in order to go and attack the city of Kallacahabalaba, ten leagues distant from hence, a place of great strength, though destitute of every artificial defence.—And what will the army consist of, which is to rank under my standards? —Of eight generals, each of whom, in his own way, is able to shake a kingdom; and to give you an idea of them, I am the feeblest of them all. Yet it would have been in my power, if I had undertaken the enterprize, to have become master of Damas. It is a well watered city: Well! in eight days there would not have been as much water left as would have quenched the thirst of a hen.—My good dervise, you are properly named Pretaboire; and, now that I know your powers, I find you very moderate: You have a most prodigious faculty; you could easily ruin Egypt.—Oh! replied Pretaboire, in order to that, it would be necessary to go and drink the Nile at its source, and that is too long a journey.—And tell me, replied Tranchemont, are your companions whom you spoke of as extraordinary as you. I am extremely desirous to become acquainted with them.—You shall see them to-morrow, said the dervise; they will lay their proofs before you: They have need of counsel to direct



their enterprises, for they have all more ability than understanding; they want a chief to command them with authority, and to give them an example; and they will find him in you.

By Mahomet! exclaimed the Captain, casting his eyes up to heaven, I am tempted to pardon my bitch of a star for bringing me hither, since it has led me to the command of my equals!—But, let us speak a little concerning your place of war; Who has the command of it? What could one do with him?—It is under the yoke of a strange tyrant, whose name is Bigstaff: You must banish him. One tyrant succeeds another, and thus your star will be proved false; for, except the name, you will reign as well as another, and perhaps better; because you know no law but your own will.—Are you of any religion?—No indeed; I was circumcised however.—That is sufficient.—My dear Pretaboire! you are an accommodating saint; it is just such as these that I love; But I should wish to accustom myself to your honey and water, that I might get drunk with you. In the mean time, before I go to rest, I am anxious to have a more accurate idea of the city of Kallacahabalaba, for I form all my plans of attack in bed.

Kallacahabalaba, replied the dervise, is situated on a high detached mountain, cut all round  
with

with a pick-ax, to the height of sixty feet, in such a manner as that nothing but a snail can ascend it.—And how do the inhabitants come down?—They do not come down at all; they descend in baskets fixed to chains of iron. These machines are so fitted, as to let down to the ground an hundred baskets at once, containing ten men each, with their arms and baggage; this is done very quickly, and without the least embarrassment: The people of the country, for twenty leagues round, are so much afraid at this shower of armed men, that they hasten with great eagerness, carrying their tribute to the foot of the mountain, and fill all the baskets that are there.—By my beard! said the captain, I shall lose a little of my renown if I don't disturb this business.—But, what kind of a fellow is that Bigstaff you mentioned? Is he a champion of a certain strength? Would he gallantly accept the proposal of measuring swords with me?—His stature is somewhat gigantic; covered with iron from head to foot, he walks as nimbly as if it were with feathers; besides, he never plays but with his club, which is of gilded brass, and weighs seventy-five pounds; he uses it like a rod of aloes, and I believe he would not engage in single combat with any but such as could oppose to him an arm of equal strength.—Ah! replied Tranchemont, what pleasure should I

feel to be opposed to him at an arm's distance! I would make my blade enter exactly at the bottom of his nose, that, before he expired under my strokes, I might have the pleasure of seeing him gnash his teeth. But I am born to conquer or die under the protection of my sabre, and I leave the use of the club to those whose profession it is to fell cattle.—Besides, does this fellow never come out alone? Could one not attack him without giving him time to take his advantage?—He never comes out, replied the dervise, except when he knows of any one travelling in his dominions. Alas! this cost two of our companions their life, Brasdefer \* and Dents'acier †, who had gone on an adventure of hunting upon his territory. They were invincible by any other; but, having made them be surrounded by his people, while Brasdefer, with the stroke of his fist had knocked down a good many of them, and Dents'acier had made others feel the astonishing strength of his jaw, Bigstaff himself came up, and knocked them both down with his club.—'Sdeath! I will revenge them, exclaimed captain Tranchemont; your recital makes my blood boil as if I had just assassinated my brother. Let us go to sleep, in order to moderate the impatience with

which

\* Iron-arm.

† Steel-tooth.

which I burn to be acquainted with all your people ; for I know no other remedy.

Pretaboire yielded to this invitation, and they both stretched themselves on some leaves, and skins of beasts, which were at the bottom of the cell. They awaked with the first rays of the morning, and had issued from their cave to take a walk, when the dervise perceived at a distance three people coming towards them : These are our people, said he.—What are their names ?—Their names are descriptive of their talents ; the name of the first is Quicksight\* ; he could perceive a needle on the ground at the distance of forty leagues ; he is our spy. The name of the second is Aimwell† ; he could fix an arrow in the heart of an apple at the same distance. And Cut-the-air‡, the last, could go and pick it up in five minutes. But they shall perform in your presence, and you shall judge of the advantage which may be derived from them. Mean while the three performers arrived.

“ Rejoice, comrades !” said Pretaboire to them ; “ fortune hath restored us, in this gallant knight,

\* *Quicksight*, in French, *Percevue* ; and in the Arabic, *Guillarich*.

† *Aimwell*, in French, *Droitaubut* ; and in the Arabic, *Nadhertavil*.

‡ *Cut-the-air*, in French *Fendl'air* ; and in the Arabic, *Karaamek*.

knight, much more than she took from us in Brasdefer and Dentd'acier. This is the formidable Captain Tranchemont, by whose arm, sabre, and head, we shall be enabled to revenge ourselves on our cruel enemy, and to live in joy and peace on the earth. But you know that we must dine to-day; are you come without provisions?—"No," replied Aimwell, "we will do tolerably well if you have cakes. Strong-back\* was coming with us, carrying on his shoulders a calf six months old, and two tuns of wine under his arms, when the fancy struck him of entering a garden to gather a fallad; he walks at a good pace, and will soon be here if he meets with no accident." When he had said this, Strong-back arrived with a fallad hanging at his neck. They were three enormous cabages, which, being tied together by a cord, adorned his body on all sides. Notwithstanding his burden, his gait seemed as nimble as if he had been carrying only a bag of nuts. He laid his burden on the ground, and was presented by Pretaboire to Tranchemont. "There, my general," said he, tapping Strong-back on the shoulder, "is our chariot of war. Sack towns, conquer armies, plunder; the back which you see will leave nothing behind; it would not bend

\* Strong-back, in French, Bondos; and in the Arabic, Bllarmich.

bend under the weight of the treasures of Solomon."—"Hitherto," said Tranchemont, "those who should have carried away my plunder would not have bent long under their weight. Whenever I have any booty, I sit down in a corner, and eat till nothing remains. To see me devour whatever I have gotten, one would think I was perpetually pursued by robbers or incendiaries; it is my bitch of a star that forces me to eat almost continually, in order to render me incapable of showing favour to anything; but, thanks to you, my dear astrologer, I must hope that we are in the right.—Hold,—I see there a little calf, which weighs good an hundred and eighty pounds; and a little of my old habit leads me to wish that we should eat it just now."—"It was made for this purpose," replied Pretaboire: "Hola! ho!" said he, calling his people. "Strong-back, skin that calf, and make a spit: Quickfight! Cut-the-air! where is the cook?"

Quickfight looked round the country, and perceiving with the naked eye, what no mortal could have distinguished with the best telescope, "Ah!" said he, "I perceive him; he is not far from this, but he is amusing himself with roasting quails; as they fly over his head, he picks their feathers in the air, and eats them. "Do you see," said Pretaboire, "how this rascal



rascal is engaged on a review-day? He roasts quails in the air, that, completely dressed, they may drop in showers into his mouth!—And, where is that lazy knave *Toujoursdort*\*, to beat the drum, and oblige every one to come at the signal?"—"I perceive him also," said *Quickfight*; "he is asleep under the shade of a broom; the earth seems to shake with his snoring, and I cannot conceive how you do not hear him from this place."—"You see, friends," said *Pretaboire*, "that we have great need of discipline: And how extremely fortunate we are in having accordingly found a chief?—Come, *Cut-the-air*, shew us the place where the quail-eater and the snorer are; and let them come with all haste."

"You shall see," added *Pretaboire*, "what kind of men these two are. The cook *Soufflefeu*† shall give you a specimen of what he can do. He could melt a mine of metals in the bowels of the earth. As for *Toujoursdort*, his talents are pretty moderate; but he has one which is extremely useful to us. When we let him out to the combat, he spreads terror all around. By striking his belly, he makes it emit a sound like that of forty drums. He sets up such dreadful howlings as could make walls tumble down.

While

\* *Toujoursdort*, Sleep-ever.

† *Soufflefeu*, Blow-fire.

While he was explaining all this to Tranchemont, *Toujoursdort* and *Soufflefeu* arrived. "Drummer," said the dervise to the first, "go and beat the signal. *Soufflefeu*, go you and roast the calf which *Strong-back* is putting on the spit." Then turning towards Tranchemont: "My general," said he to him, "it is your part now to show these people what you can do: There is the calf on the spit, and the cabbages cut into shreds; but we have neither any thing to collect the juice of the roast, nor a plate in which to dress the salad; but, cut off dexterously a whole slice of the biscuit which is before my door, and thereby procure the necessary vessels for holding our sauce and our herbs."

The captain eagerly seized this opportunity of displaying his dexterity. He drew his sabre, and, with the first stroke, cut off a slice half an inch thick, the whole length of the stone. He then formed in it a place to receive the juice of the roast; and the slice which he had cut off served as a plate for the cabbages. The spectators, who were no less apt to be struck with admiration, than capable of exciting it, paid the just tribute to the ease and accuracy of the work.

In the mean time, Tranchemont, in his turn, felt a great curiosity to see a calf roasted in a place

place where he saw no fire, nor coal, nor wood to make one. Strong-back acted as turn-spit; and the spit itself rested on two large stones, placed in the middle of a very green plot of grass. "Come, Soufflefeu," said Pre-taboire, "do your duty: You are sensible that there is no occasion to burn the roast, we need only a gentle and penetrating fire; manage the matter properly. Soufflefeu was a man of deeds, and not of words; and proportioned his hot breath so nicely, that he seemed not so much to roast, as to gild the immense roast which was turned round before him; so that the juice run down upon the cabbages, which he set a boiling by some puffs of fire that he sent to them. The Captzin appeared highly delighted with the talents of this cook, and shewed himself eager to give farther proofs of his own. He observed, that it was impossible to have a table in the cell of the dervise, on account of a rock of granite, six feet high, and of equal thickness, which occupied the whole centre. "Stand back a little," said he to the people who were around him, "I am going to strike off, from this little stone, some chips which might start into your eyes; we must have a place to prepare our table." At the same time, he struck the rock with his sabre, with so much exactness, that every piece which

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he detached from it appeared a table of marble that needed only to be polished. "What a terrible arm! what a valiant sword!" exclaimed the witnesses of this exploit.—"Brothers," said Pretaboire to them, "it is this which must shew us the way to glory and to gain."

They eagerly cleared the rubbish from the place, which was now freed from this huge stone, as ugly as it was incommodious. The most beautiful of the pieces being artfully joined together, formed benches around a table, which, with five or six strokes of his sabre, the Captain had rendered perfectly square, and had hollowed out below to make room for their legs. "Never did any companion of our labours," said Pretaboire, "perform so neatly that work in which he excelled! Toujoursdort clapped his belly in token of admiration; and his gentle rubbings made the cave re-echo with a dreadful sound. Meanwhile the cover was laid; Soufflefeu brought the roast. "Wine! wine!" cried Pretaboire, bringing with him a bag of fifty pounds weight of cakes. Strongback went to bring the tuns; but Tranchemont, who dreaded the dervise's thirst, thought it his duty to remind him of his vows: "is your penitence ended, holy man?"—"No," replied Pretaboire, "I must drink some cups

of honey and water; but I reserve a pitcher of wine to wash my mouth."

They sat down to table, and every one of them did great justice to the feast. There was but little conversation; however, from time to time, one of the guests related an exploit of his own peculiar kind. It was always of the marvellous sort. Towards the middle of the repast, Pretaboire, having somewhat blunted the edge of his appetite, cast a look around him. "Brethren," said he, "our number is not complete; Grippenuage\* and Grossitout are wanting; however, they had the signal, for Toujoursdort beat the drum so as to make it be heard at a distance. As the dervise was making this reflection, the two characters made their appearance at the entrance of the cave. —"You deserve," said he, "not to have so much as a crust to eat. I respect people of abilities only when they are regular in their duty; and to-morrow, if you fail in the service, you shall answer for it to a more able general than I am: In the mean time, sit down and drink. After dinner, you shall be informed of most wonderful things. You are in the presence of a very great master, the illustrious Captain Tranchemont. We have made choice of him for our general, and we are to pass in review before him; as for me, I am exhibiting proofs

\* *Grippenuage*, Catch-cloud.

proofs of my abilities, as you shall see." Saying this, he swallowed his pitcher full of wine at one draught. The persons who were just come in, having nothing to reply, modestly bowed down, and dinner was ended.

"Come, brothers," said Pretaboire, when the repast was finished, we must pass in review, and begin, by making sure of some dishes for our supper. Quickfight! Aimwell! Cut-the-air! attend!

"Quickfight, I want an hundred pounds of venison, in four pieces. Observe the banks of distant rivers; seek us some young deer, goats, and an antelope; they must all be tender, and easily digested." The performer put himself in the proper position; at first his looks seemed to move along the ground near at hand, and then, imperceptibly, his view was extended to a great distance, and skimmed over the world.

"Ah!" exclaimed he, "I have found what you want behind that little hill, at the distance of ten leagues." "Aimwell," said the dervise, "prepare your bow." Aimwell fixed a stake before Quickfight, bent his bow, and set himself in a proper position for shooting his arrow. "At the distance of ten leagues?" said he to Quickfight,— "and thirty paces." The arrow flew; Quickfight followed it with his eyes. "The deer is pierced," said he.



"Come, Cut-the-air, put your shoes in a proper state, and pick up the game." The order was instantly executed. Pretaboire repeated the command three times; and in half an hour the four pieces of venison were procured, and brought to Strong-back, who skinned them, and put them on the spit.

Pretaboire having examined the sack of bread: "How!" said he, "have we only thirty pounds weight? Quickficht, look out for some fresh bread."—"There is an oven full of it at Masser, which is still quite hot," replied he, "and the baker has just turned his back to clean his oven."—"There is a fine opportunity to purchase his bread for nothing: Go, Cut-the-air, take the bag, and make the bargain." The order was instantly obeyed; and the bread was in the cell before the baker perceived it. "You see, General," said the dervise, "that the butlery is pretty well furnished. Ah! if Strong-back had wings, we might have wine; but we must not always be dying with thirst. Come, Grippenuage! lay hold of that cloud which is passing, and force it to shed its contents on this place; if there are any hailstones, so much the better; for I love exceedingly to drink ice. The cloud was pretty high: Grippenuage took a clut of silk from his pocket, and made it fly up to the cloud. The clew

was

was wound down; and the end of it being so low as to be within reach of the hand, the man then fixed himself to it, and the vapour seemed to attract him with an astonishing rapidity. "Comrades," said Pretaboire, "let us expose our pitchers to the water which is about to fall; and, as we have no change of mantles, let us place ourselves in the cave. The whole troop obeyed; the cloud descended; Grippe-nuage squeezed its sides; and, by the help of his thread, came down with the shower.

Tranchemont beheld with astonishment the performance of these miracles. "You must agree, General," said Pretaboire, "that, under your command, one might promise the most splendid success with these brave fellows."—"I never saw," said Tranchemont, "an assemblage of talents so rare, and so well suited to one another; we are fit to undertake every thing. I have already revolved a great many plans in my mind.—Stop; do not speak to me at present, you would distract my thoughts.—I have forgot something very essential; since we have only water to quench our thirst, we should at least have some flagons of liquor. We have still three hours of day; let us wait nothing: Then the dervise called his people.

"Quickfight," said he, "and you Cut-the-air, get us some flagons of liquor. You know

that they are generally placed in the terrasses, that the sun may dart his meridian beams upon them. Go and make an attack upon them: What cannot be done in one voyage, may be finished in two." The order was executed; and, in a quarter of an hour, the side-board was furnished with four large flagons of liquor. "This Cut-the-air is extremely expert, cunning, and expeditious," said Pretaboire; "it is a great pity he has not a stronger back, one might derive inconceivable advantage from him."—By Mahomet, said Tranchemont, without this little medicine, I should have had a fine noise in my belly all night. But, my good der-vise! Could not we have some figs?—I give you the whole earth to choose them from.—I take you at your word, replied the Captain.—I want the finest figs that grow in Africa.—Come Cut-the-air! You hear what the general wishes for. Put a basket on your arm: Pick them with great care, and return in half an hour at the farthest, for you may be wanted! Cut-the-air disappeared.

The venison was on the spot, Strong-back was turning it, Soufflefeu was employed in broasting it, and Toujournsdort had gone to snore at some hundred steps distance in order not to incommode any person; still, however, he was heard, "You have a snorer there," said Tranchemont, "who is somewhat disagreeable."—

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He must be allowed rest, replied Pretaboire; it is in his excellent habit of body that his merit consists; it keeps his belly stretched; besides he makes us merry; he imitates the timbrel, by beating on his cheeks, and that amuses us: it is necessary to put all their talents to some purpose.—You are in the right: but tell me who is that man whom I see sitting with his arms across? I know not yet what he can do.—That is he who has the charge of our lodgings: When we take the field, with very small means, he makes a great affair of every thing. His name is Grosfitout. His business is very fatiguing; but you will be a better judge of it when you see him at work.

The day was spent in such conversation as this; but Cut-the-air had not returned. Pretaboire was uneasy. “Hola, Quickfight!” said he, “seek in the orchards of Africa, and endeavour to discover Cut-the-air, who has either lost or forgotten himself.” Quickfight examined attentively. Ah! the wretch,” said he, “he has eaten more figs than he has gathered; he is very near Damas, and is asleep at the side of his basket. The Arabians, who ramble in the neighbourhood, will steal it; they will take his shoes from him, and we shall see him no more. There is a large bird perched on a branch of the tree under which he reposes; if

Aimwell

Aimwell would kill the bird, its fall might awaken Cut-the-air.—At what distance is the bird you mean ? said Aimwell.—Exactly seventy-five leagues. Aimwell then stuck up his stake, and fitted his arrow, which immediately flew off. Quickfight examined the stroke. “The bird is fallen,” said he ; “the sleeper is awakened, and is now on his way.” The figs were in the cave in a moment after. “Let us not chide our purveyor,” said Tranchemont to Pretaboire, “this accident has shown us the usefulness of Quickfight and Aimwell.—But I suppose the supper is ready ; let us put the table in order.” —“That must not be, if you please” replied Pretaboire, “till after our camp shall have been prepared, and I shall have caused beat the retreat according to the custom of warriors.” At the same time he called Grossitout, who obeyed the order.

Have you taken your measures, and chosen your ground ? We sleep to-night in the tent ; you must lay us at our ease in it.—The ground is before you, replied Grossitout ; your lodging is in my breast, and my lungs must extend it.—By Mahomet ! exclaimed the general, that is a strange riddle.—“It is not a riddle ;” said the dervise, “at least what you are going to see will explain it to you. Let us approach the place where the operator is about to perform.

Grossi-

Grossitout had a small purse, of the size of an egg, hung to a girdle with which his breast was girt. It appeared to be shut by four small strings, at the end of which some small pins of steel seemed to be fixed. He opened it, and blowed into it; and suddenly it was of the size of a melon: He continued to blow till he could put his head into it; he introduced his head; and was seen blowing with greater force in the cap he had formed for himself. Every instant its size increased; and, as it descended to the very ground, the body of the blower was entirely shut up in it. His companions then took up the little strings of the purse, which were now become cords, and drew the four sides; the top of the ball had taken the shape of a tent, which was supported by four pikes, which he always carried with him in their march. Grossitout continued his labour, and the tent increased so as commodiously to lodge twenty people; and the pins of steel, now become pikes of iron, driven in the ground, made the lodging most completely firm.

“Holy prophet! exclaimed Tranchemont, in raptures, “I have just now seen the king, the very god of mushrooms; it is a perfect miracle!”—“Without flattery, general,” said Pre-taboire, “to those who have seen your actions every thing is credible, and boasting is excluded;



ed: but Groffitout had exerted his power very sparingly; he is capable of blowing up a tent sufficient to lodge all the pilgrims to Mecca, with their escort." At that instant the loud sound of a drum was heard at a distance; and, without the perfect unity in the strokes, one would have supposed there was fifty. "What sound is that I hear?" said Tranchemont."—It is nothing," said the dervise; "it is only *Toujoursdort* stroking his belly to beat a retreat; he is a brave fellow for sounding a charge."—My good dervise, the companions of your penitence are very extraordinary people.—They are forced like me to live in retirement, on account of the bad character they have with the public; but, with your assistance, we shall be able to get out of it; and we can drive from his nest this vulture *Bigstaff*, who lets loose upon us baskets full of his fowls covered over with steel, which keep our troop in continual alarm.

Ah! though this fellow had a citadel surrounded with a triple ditch full of water, by mixing a little honey in it, you would soon drink it up. I would attack the wall with my sabre, and, by Mahomet! you know whether I can cut any slices. I would intrench myself under the fortress, before they could think of throwing stones at me. I would cause *Strongback* throw the rubbish into the ditch, and I would appear unexpectedly in the place. You should

should then see how I would fall upon the coat of mail by which all these rascals are protected.—This is a plan truly worthy of yourself, general, replied Pretaboire, but the tyrant is secure from such an attempt—I swear by your book, venerable dervise, that I shall devise some plan from which he cannot secure himself—but let us go to supper.—It is the best resolution we can at present take, said the dervise, for the roast would have been cold if Soufflefeu had not kept it warm.

The little army were all seated round a well furnished table, lighted by a lamp with three branches, and conversing about their future plans. “Comrades!” said Tranchemont, “you may depend upon my utmost exertions to merit your approbation; but, as you have made me your commander, I warn you that our march shall be regular and very expeditious—I have only drunk one draught of water, and it has made me sick—To-morrow, by sunrise, I will go through the review, I will give my orders; and, the camp being struck during the review, I will immediately begin the march.—Let us drink one draught of liquor and go to bed, thinking on the victory which awaits us.—Were my stomach hollow like a well, I will sleep upon these flints, as if I were stretched on a bed of roses.—Let us finish what remains, as we are to set out

out to-morrow with a great project in our heads. We must begin with starving the rats in this place, by leaving them not even a crust to gnaw—Let us conclude the banquet; let all the troop follow me, and go to the camp. It is proper that we should sleep in the tent—Come, “Quick-sight, do you see any thing by night?”—“As well as by day, general.”—“That’s good; you will be on the watch around the camp, and to-morrow, during the march, you shall enjoy sleep upon Strongback’s shoulders——Grippenuage, draw near; lay hold on that cloud which you see over our heads, by means of your clew, and force it to refresh the air by shedding a slight dew—Tojournsdort will go to snore around the camp within reach of Quick-sight, that he may be able to give the alarm if any thing extraordinary should happen.—Come, friends, let each of us take one of these skins to serve him as a pillow; warriors never renounce the conveniencies of life when they can be obtained.”

“O great, valiant, and wise captain!” said Pretaboire, obeying the order, and marching before the troop. When they had filed off, Tranchemont entered last into the tent, and lay down in the middle. The next, each at a respectful distance from the general, took the place which appeared most convenient for him:

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the dervise said his prayers, and they all quietly fell asleep.

As soon as the morning star appeared above the horizon, Quickfight awaked Toujoursdort, who, yawning, struck his belly, and the sound of the blow re-echoed through the neighbouring caverns. Tranchemont was instantly on foot, and awaked his people. "Come, my comrades," said he, "let the day find us in arms: Grosfitout, lift the camp." At this command every body left the tent; Grosfitout alone remained in it to labour, while the stakes were taking away; and, before sun-rise, the tent was folded up, and fixed to the girdle of the person whose business it was to carry it.

They were all assembled for the grand review, and Pretaboire was in the rear of the battalion. Brother? said Tranchemont, you are not in your proper place; as you are our counsellor, you should have been in the centre; but the art of war has undergone some little change, you are placed in the rear; and frequently, when the van has begun the engagement, your directions come too late. In this case, however, as the ranks are not very thick, there is nothing to prevent your coming to me in the time of need. Is your book in good condition? Is there no leaf wanting?—By Mahomet! I have not the whole of them; but it is all one; I can easily supply the defect.

Comrade Quickfight, your eyes are somewhat red; bathe them in fresh water. You should guard against defluxions.—Are the bow and arrows of Aimwell in proper case?—There is nothing wanting, general.—I am eager to be able to prove your dexterity, that I may send you a message, directly in the view of the enemy.—Show us your clue, Grippenuage. It is pretty round, and the silk well spun! It is much finer than a cobweb. But, my dear companion! if you would listen to the advice of an old soldier like me, you should soon know, that a talent, so precious as your's, ought not to be confined to refreshing the air, and washing dishes.—Soufflefeu! I cannot see the fire you have in your stomach, but I suppose it is the depository of sulphur and pitch, sufficient for the campaign. As we are about to fall upon the kitchen of another, we shall have no need of your's for our food; but I shall give it you in charge to roast every head which might give us any trouble.—Cut-the-air! Your shoes seem to be in good case; but distrust your taste for figs; you ran a great risk of losing your stockings and shoes; and, in returning from such a distance, you might have caught a very bad cold.—Grosfitout! you have put up the tent; but, let us examine if the pegs are at it, if the cords are

good

good, and if the stuff has not given way.—No, every thing is right. Tell me, Were you to blow into a melon, could you make it as large as a gourd? No, general.—It has been said with truth, that no talent is universal!—Come forward, Strong-back! you must get straps of leather to manage your burden. There is a back on which, were it level, one might build a pyramid!—Do you pair your nails? That is an error. You know well, that, to lay hold of any thing, the hand can never be sufficiently extended.—Here *Toujoursdort*! your drum is well stretched; but you must not moisten it too much within with hot liquor, that might dry its skin.—By the way, let me hear some moderate sounds of your trumpet. *Toujoursdort* obeyed, by emitting some half-notes in a grave tone; but they were sufficient to cast dismay and terror over the whole troop. *Cut-the-air* would have fled to the distance of an hundred leagues, if his legs had not failed him; *Strong-back* felt his knees bend under him; *Quicklight* became perfectly blind; *Aimwell* dropped his bow and arrows; *Grippenuage* looked for a cloud to take refuge in; *Grossitout* lost his breathing; and *Soufflefeu* felt himself chilled. “By Mahomet!” said *Tranchemont*, “taking *Pretaboire* by the hand, who had the *hickup*, there’s a fine pipe! I am not a faint-



hearted chicken, and yet I am trembling like a leaf. Comrade Toujoursdort ! you are possessed of a very superior talent, but, if you please, we will only employ it on desperate occasions. Take your place again ; and you, my friends, who have acknowledged me as your general, listen, while I explain the plan of the battle in which we are about to engage.

Our great object is to get possession of Kallacahabalaba, and to destroy Bigstaff. He has too much prudence to expose himself ; he will oppose us with his mob, which we will overcome ; but this will by no means be decisive. He must be forced by famine to capitulate ; let us lay waste the country which furnishes him with food ; and let us reduce him to the necessity of eating the rock for subsistence ! You have all the elements under your power ; you can burn, deluge, carry off, massacre, and destroy ; and therefore you can convert this country into a desert in a very short time. A moderate war might have the most ruinous consequences ; whereas, if we inspire terror, three fourths of the people will endeavour to make their escape by flight. All that we have to do, is to find out in what place we are to begin to plunder."

"Quickfight !" said the general to this admirable spy, "look towards the four cardinal  
points.

points. We want some easy business, which is almost at our hand. What do you observe in the west?"—"At the distance of twenty leagues, general, I perceive a caravan travelling towards us."—"Although," said Tranchemont, "we could reach them by sunset, yet we would arrive both fatigued and hungry; and, by plundering it, we should do no injury to Bigstaff; that's not what we want: Look toward the east. "I observe there, general, a fertile meadow, on which there are a great many cattle, and some shepherds." "That object may deserve our attention afterwards; but there is no food ready there; and, as we set out fasting, we have need to find something perfectly prepared for our dinner."—"Ah!" said Quickfight, "there's something toward the south, ready dressed! I see preparations making for a considerable marriage."—"That will do our business indeed: At how many leagues distance?"—"At ten."—"Is it in a town?"—"Yes, and a pretty populous one."—"So much the better; we shall have an opportunity of doing the more mischief and noise. These people shall not prevent us from performing our work. Let us here fix our plan."

Soufflefeu will enter the city with me, and set fire to that part of it which is over against the place, where the nuptials shall be cele-

brated. I will enter the house where the feast is to be held, and seize the bride ; and, should the bridegroom, the father, or the relations, be troublesome, I will distribute among them a few blows ; and, should that not quiet them, *Toujoursdort* shall speak a soft word in their ear from me ; and I am of opinion they will not make him repeat it. *Soufflescu* shall burn every thing except the house, where we will dine in perfect tranquility. As the inhabitants might attack us in a body, and throw stones at us, I order *Grippenuage* to seat himself on the first cloud he shall meet, to run after a good many more, and, having joined them together, to follow us with the collected mass ; he shall then pour down a thousand cart-loads of hail on the heads of the malecontents, and we shall take care to reserve for him his full share of the dinner. “ By Mahomet !” said *Pretaboire*, “ there never was an enterprise formed with so many wise precautions.”—“ Are you pleased then, dervise ?” said *Tranchemont* ; “ indeed I think every body must be so. Come along ; let us march forward. *Toujoursdort*, beat agreeably, as we are going to a marriage.” The drummer obeyed, and the troop advanced in good order. When they were within two leagues of the city, *Tranchemont* ordered *Cut-the-air* to examine what was going on at the feast, and to observe

serve if dinner was not served up too soon. In three minutes the messenger returned. "They are idolaters," said he, "and are sacrificing, before an idol of wood, a beautiful heifer, with gilded horns, which will be roasted in an hour at the farthest." "By Mahomet! said Tranchemont to Pretaboire, "ought not you to be greatly delighted? We are going to labour against idolatry, and you shall have the charge of overturning the idol. Conjure it with your book; I recommend it to you.—A marriage performed before an idol, and without a cadi! It is null and void. I will marry this young person after the Mahometan manner, in order to bring her back to the right way."

During this conversation, the march was not interrupted. They still proceeded on their road; and at length arrived in the town, directly before the house where the two families were assembled. Tranchemont entered it as if it had been his own. "What," said he, "does any one marry here without my knowledge? and do they sit down to table without me?" Let any one figure to himself the astonishment of the honest townsmen; they looked at one another without speaking a word, and trembled as they examined the armed man, who spoke to them in this manner. "We are undone! they exclaimed, "it is Bigstaff, it is the tyrant himself."

self."—"You lie, rascals! There is no tyrant here. For whom do you take me? Know that I am the husband of this fair young woman, and that she shall have no other." Saying this, he took hold of her by the arm; the husband and the relations advanced to free her from his hands; but, with a single blow, and two back strokes, he stretched them on the ground. Every one laid hold of a stick, of a knife, of some piece of furniture, or of whatever offered itself to his hand, in order to fall upon the ravisher; but, all at once, *Toujoursdort* began to sneeze. This was a talent of which *Tranchemont* was still ignorant; he was so stunned with it, that had he been less eager for his prey, he would have let go his hold. In the mean time, men and women, and every thing in the house, was overturned; and the house itself, which was not very strong, was shaken with the sound.

When *Tranchemont* had recovered from his astonishment, he said to his noisy squire, "Come along! Rid me of all that rabble; and whoever is too far from the door, throw them out at the window. *Toujoursdort* obeyed, and the house was cleared of all its guests. There only remained the young wife, who, having fainted through terror, would have fallen like the rest, had she not been supported by the vigorous captain. Meanwhile a cry of fire was heard  
through

through the whole town, and shrieks and howlings were every where set up. "Come," said Tranchemont to Toujoursdort, "this is not a time to snore; our companions may lose themselves amid this confusion; you must beat the signal." The drummer did so, the whole troop returned; and the entertainment, prepared for the nuptials, was eaten up.

The new married wife, obliged to remain with this company, and endure the brutal caresses of Tranchemont, ceased not to shed tears. "What pleasure should I have in comforting you, my beautiful girl!" said the Captain to her; "shed one of these pretty tears in my cup; it will make the drink delicious." But she turned away her head with an air, which was expressive at once of her grief and disgust.

While these robbers were eating, and glutting themselves most immoderately, a small detachment of fifteen men belonging to the garrison of Kallacahabalaba, who usually went their round in the neighbourhood, had been informed of their arrival; their chief had been described to them; but they did not consider Tranchemont as very formidable; they therefore surrounded the house where he and his followers were, and prepared to attack him. The chief of this detachment entered suddenly,  
with



with his sabre raised over *Toujoursdort*, who, by sneezing, warded off the stroke. *Tranchemont*, alarmed at the noise, arose and put himself in a posture of defence. A blow of his sabre had cleft from head to foot the boldest of them; with a back stroke he cut in two the person who followed; the third had a shoulder broken; the fourth lost the half of his arm; the fifth lost his head; and the sixth lost both his legs. When the other soldiers of *Bigstaff* beheld this defeat, terror administered wings to them; and, that they might fly with the greater speed, they threw away their arms and their bucklers. The companions of *Tranchemont*, seeing them in disorder, pursued them without a moment's respite. *Grippenuage* showered hail upon them; *Soufflefeu* roasted as many of them as he met with; and *Toujoursdort* sneezed in the ears of those whom he could come up with; even *Pretaboire* himself knocked them down with his book; they all fell perfectly stunned, and were delivered to the sabre of *Tranchemont*, who completed their destruction; so that not not one of them was left to carry the report of their common disaster.

After this defeat, the victorious general returned to enjoy the reward of his victory, in the arms of his conquest. During the battle, however, she had made her escape. He entered

in great fury, and called Quickfight. "Hola!" said he, " wilt thou suffer thy chief to be deprived of all the happiness he had a right to promise himself? Seek for the faithless girl to me.—By Mahomet! Curse on the fellow who conceals her!" Quickfight exerted his utmost address and attention. " General! I cannot perceive her. I observe very plainly a company of women three leagues distant from this, flying with their children and baggage, but the new married woman is not of the number. The walls of the town, however, cannot conceal her from me, for they were of wood, and are all burnt down; she must of necessity be under the ground, and there you know I can see nothing. " Ah! by the holy prophet!" exclaimed Tranchemont, " it is very hard to conquer without enjoying the triumph. This is another trick of my bitch of a star! Oh, for a thousand bombs! It disputes every kind of victory with me; I am in perfect despair.—Go, order Toujoursdort to found a retreat, and let every one take his seat at the table! There is something here to drink, and my grief is of that kind that it must be absolutely drowned.

The little troop soon rejoined their general; and, as they shared in his affection, so they likewise

likewise partook of the consolation he had chosen.

“ Ah! my dear Strong-back!” said Tranchemont, “ the pretty limbs you would have carried on your shoulders! Never would you have been loaded with so sweet a burden! But, like the dervise, we are, at present, forced to lead a life of penitence; let us continue it, at least till the middle of the night, that it may be more meritorious. You, *Toujoursdort*! as I have great confidence in your talent, I give it to you in charge to secure our repose till sunset. Go, and take a turn at half a league’s distance from this place; and, whenever you shall perceive any curious prying people, beat as it were eighty drums, and sound your trumpet somewhat loudly.” *Toujoursdort* obeyed, while his companions continued the immoderate enjoyment of the bottle, till they were all stretched under the table.

There was not a wedding every day, otherwise they would have found their entertainment quite ready, without giving themselves any trouble. Next day, the troop, under the command of Tranchemont, made prodigious havock on every side; and with so much the more boldness, that, under such a leader, they flattered themselves with impunity. But they themselves were obliged to dress whatever they wanted

wanted to eat. Every night they encamped under their tent, the situation of which was unknown, for they never pitched it till it was dark. During the day they were frequently obliged to fight, because they met with small detachments, like that which had proposed to surround them; these they invariably put to death. Whoever escaped the sword and the fire, fell before the voice of *Toujoursdort*, who completely broke the drum of their ears by whispering to them. At length, the hail was showered down upon them, and completed the disaster and desolation.

A man, however, had devised a method of delivering the country from this terrible scourge, which was spreading such desolation. This was, by arming the inhabitants with slings, and overwhelming the authors of all this destruction with stones. *Quicksight* observed this man, as he was trying this new weapon, the use of which he was to propose. He saw him about to communicate his discovery to the people around him. But, at the very moment in which he opened his mouth, an arrow flew from *Aimwell's* bow, entered his throat, and arrested the salutary advice in its passage. The country was in absolute despair; and advices to that purpose were carried from all quarters to *Kallacahabalaba*, by an hundred arrows which alighted in it: (This was the way

in which requests were presented to Bigstaff, and in which all complaints or advices reached him). Upon this, the tyrant summoned his council, which consisted of a single astrologer deeply skilled in geomancy.

“ You see to what a condition we are about to be reduced,” said he : “ Nobody indeed can disturb us here ; but nothing can save us from the famine by which we are threatened. Hitherto my arms have successfully opposed these extraordinary robbers who infest my country ; but their audacity has, without doubt, increased with their strength. They have at their head a chief, who alone hath destroyed several detachments of my soldiers, who watch over the safety of these countries, and collect the taxes : There is something very supernatural in the reports and complaints which have been made to me ; devise therefore some method by which we may provide for our safety.” — “ I have been thinking on that for some time,” replied the learned person. “ I have cast the nativity of all these people, and have found, that ordinary arms could give you no advantage over them. The pretended talents, which they employ to such bad purposes, are more or less magical ; but this art is so very defective, that the most powerful mean it employs may be rendered ineffectual, by the most trifling of all those

those which may be directly opposed to it: Thus, I will approach *Toujoursdort* with cotton in my ears, and his drum will have no effect upon me. I will spit in *Soufflefeu's* mouth, and the fire will be extinguished. *Quicklight* becomes useless, in proportion as danger approaches. The arrow of *Aimwell* is blunted against steel. *Cut-the-air* is but a messenger, who may be easily stopped. The science of *Grippenuage* depends upon a thread, which it may be possible to cut. *Pretaboire* is but a coward of a dervise, and can do nothing where there is not water to drink; but we must secure ourselves against his book. *Grossitout* and *Strong-back* make part of the baggage, and are by no means formidable. But the most dangerous enemy whom we have to encounter is *Captain Tranchemont*, the chief of that cursed race. He is constantly out of favour with the stars; and is actually endowed by them with the gift of doing all possible mischief, without ever performing one good office. He hath a ready and active genius, an intrepid soul, and a body of uncommon strength; but he is the perpetual victim of his rashness. He wears a sabre all bespangled, which the diamond itself cannot resist: Should you oppose to him your club of brass, he would cut it in a thousand pieces, and you would be instantly



disarmed. His usual custom is to send a challenge; but he has been already informed that you never accept any but on conditions to which he will not agree. However, Sir! if you will arm yourself and your soldiers as I shall advise, I will venture to promise you infallible success over him and all his troop.”—“Go to my arsenal,” said Bigstaff, “and cause all the arms you shall judge proper for my soldiers and myself to be prepared: I hold your advice in too great estimation not to follow it implicitly.”—“I warn you, however,” said the astrologer, “that these arms will be very uncommon.”—“It does not signify; they will be so much the fitter for engaging the enemy: One uncommon thing must be opposed by another equally wonderful.”

Captain Tranchemont continued to ravage the plain: And Bigstaff, in concert with his learned counsellor, prepared the little army which was to take the field. It was assembled; and, with great secrecy, the arms and instruments of war with which it was to be furnished, were completed in the arsenals. When all was ready, a body of three hundred men, shining in steel, was let down from the fortrefs by the help of pullies and baskets, and covered the plain.

“The

"The enemy! The enemy!" exclaimed Quickfight. "Are they let down from the minarets?" said Tranchemont.—"Yes, General; see, the baskets are emptying! Three hundred men, and a chief who commands them, have come out.—It is the tyrant himself; I know him by his stature: He appears much taller than common.—Ah! what a singular helmet he wears upon his head! It is a large seething-pot; Soufflefeu must make it boil.—His buckler is five inches thick; and his eyes sparkle as if they were burning.—Shall I go, General! and put the stake before Aimwell, that he may send him a present from you to his left eye?"—"You are very zealous, soldier!" said Tranchemont; "look, but presume not to advise.—My enemy is then in the plain, and guarded in a very ridiculous manner against my strokes!—Come, Toujoursdort! Summon all our people by the signal, and let us march to meet the enemy.

The two armies were soon in view, and within the reach of an arrow. Tranchemont was stationed in the centre, betwixt Toujoursdort and Soufflefeu; Pretaboire and Quickfight were in the right wing; and Cut-the-air and Aimwell in the left; Strong-back and Groffitout were placed in the rear; and Grip-penuage dragged along with him a tempest,

which he balanced in the air, waiting the proper opportunity to discharge it.

On his side, Bigstaff made the necessary dispositions; and drew up his army in a line three men deep. In the foremost rank, were placed those who handled the naked armour; every soldier in the second was armed with a syringe; and those in the third with a pair of scissars; and all were armed with defensive weapons of the very best temper.

Tranchemont beheld this triple row of warriors displayed against him; and, full of confidence in his forces, he marched forward in full assurance of an easy victory. He advanced ten paces before his troop, as if to challenge his enemy to single combat. Bigstaff advanced in order to accept; and the armies remained in suspense, when Tranchemont ordered *Toujoursdort* to sound the charge. This was the only order that was well executed; for, in every other respect, events, unforeseen by Tranchemont, disconcerted all his projects, and rendered his efforts ineffectual.

As soon as Tranchemont and his adversary had opposed buckler to buckler, the former wished to discharge on the head of Bigstaff one of those decisive strokes, by which the strength of his arm, and the temper of his blade, had been so often signalized; but, before he struck, he

he thought of addressing, in the following manner, the enemy, over whom he was certain of victory.

“Bigstaff!” said he to him, “tyrant of scullions! art thou not ashamed to present thyself to battle with a pot upon thy head? Dost thou think then that thy kitchen-tackling can save thee from the strokes with which thou art threatened? Or, hath my evil star suggested to you this ridiculous defence, that I might reap nothing from my victory but the disgrace of having triumphed over the prince of cooks? Must the brave soldiers of Tranchemont then engage with apothecaries and barbers?—Darest thou lift against me the club, which does not become thy shameful hand so well as the spit on which thy roast is turned every day? It would have matched thy helmet and buckler extremely well.”

“Tranchemont,” replied Bigstaff, “thy words and thy conduct are alike. I am not come out against thee to encounter a warrior, but a butcher, by profession. And, if it belongs to me to act nobly in every thing, to you it belongs to perish by an ignominious death. Thou challengest me to inflict the first blow; dare thyself to give it.”—“By Mahomet thou shalt not be deceived,” said Tranchemont. With these words he let fall a stroke, quicker than

than lightening, on the pot which covered the head of his enemy; but the moment the fabre touched it, instead of penetrating the pot, it rebounded in such a manner as to shake the vigorous arm which wielded it. Tranchemont, astonished at this resistance, wanted to cleave, with one blow, the arm and the buckler of his adversary; but the blade of his scymitar flew into pieces. Instead of having struck, as he thought, upon iron, it was against a hollow gourd and a moulded cheese, that the magical power of his fabre was exhausted.

“Great God!” exclaimed Tranchemont, as he retreated four steps; “Holla! Souffle-feu! Let this head be put to the fire, and make it as hot as that of hell.”

Soufflefeu was about to obey; but instantly a deluge of water entered his mouth, directed from an hundred syringes; and there issued out of it nothing but a thick smoke. Deprived of this aid, the disconcerted general called Grippenuage to his assistance, who hovered over the army with a provision of hail and thunder; but all the scissars of the third line of Bigstaff’s foldiers were in the air, and, by cutting the invisible threads, turned the storm against the opposing army.

Tranchemont then, declining an honourable retreat, thought it his duty to make use of his  
last

last resource, and made Toujoursdort beat the march. But, in consequence of the cotton with which the ears of his soldiers were stopped, the army of Bigstaff was not dismayed with the noise. They at length surrounded Tranchemont. The drummer redoubled his strokes upon his enormous belly, and the whole troop was stunned with the terrible din, and fled with all their speed; but Tranchemont remained the victim. The tyrant of Kallacahabalaba put him to death with his club; Toujoursdort burst; Soufflefeu was suffocated by the smoke; the rest escaped as well as they could, and sought their safety in the caverns which had served them for a retreat.

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IN this manner did Dobil-Hafen finish his story. The attention which had been paid to him, and the pleased air which he thought he remarked in his hearers, inspired him with good hopes of success. "I have," said he, "related very extraordinary things, but the terms which we have accepted obliged me to tell a story, the incidents of which should be absolutely new. I have made them happen to unknown characters; I have had the greatest desire to please my amiable cousin, but know not if I have been



so happy."—"O most certainly," said Vafumé, "your story hath given us all very great pleasure; and my good Nané will not deny that she laughed very heartily."—"I confess," said the nurse, "I was all attention; and every moment I expected some new jest. I was ignorant of this manner of telling stories, and felt it entirely new to me.—But is this all we are to hear?"—"No, my good nurse," replied Vafumé, "there is still another, and we wait with impatience till he who is to relate it shall choose to begin." Saying this, she cast her eyes on the youngest of her cousins, whom timidity kept silent.

Valid-Hafen was more passionately in love with his cousin than his brothers: His inclination was under the influence of a more delicate, and less interested taste; and he would have preferred her to the most advantageous match in Sur-rat. But, at that moment, the fear of losing her banished from his mind all the resources of his imagination; and, although he was endowed with an uncommon memory and understanding, nothing presented itself to his mind which did not appear to have been thought of by others; perhaps, also, self-love might be at stake. However that be, his embarrassment was very visible, his lips trembled, and an involuntary blush overspread his forehead. This  
hesitation

hesitation alarmed the beautiful Vafumé, who, being more particularly interested in her young cousin, secretly wished that he might be victorious ; and the good Nané expected a story.

At length Valid-Hasen took courage, and got over the dangerous step which he dreaded, by beginning as follows :

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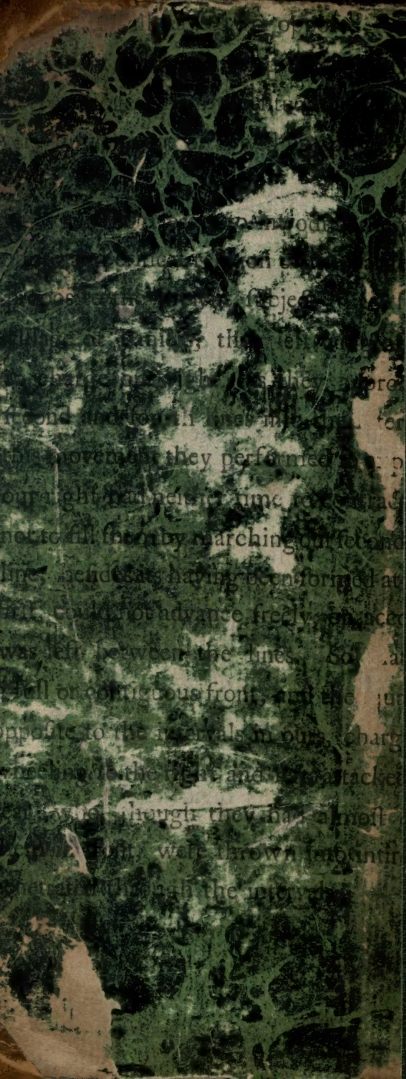
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